UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE UNIQUE ROLE OF SLED DOGS IN INUIT CULTURE:
An Examination of the Relationship Between Inuit and Sled Dogs in the Changing North

by

KERRIE ANN SHANNON ©

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

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The Unique Role of Sled Dogs in Inuit Culture

Abstract

This research explores the role of sled dogs in Inuit culture and examines the relationship between humans and sled dogs. The literature describing Northern hunters and their relationship to animals primarily focuses on the relationship with hunted animals, where animals are perceived as being "non-human persons" in a relationship of reciprocity with humans. Sled dogs have mainly been studied as part of material culture, technology, or mode of production.

Fieldwork was conducted in Coral Harbour, Southampton Island, Northwest Territories from mid-October to mid-January 1995-1996. The current functions for dogs, as well as the classification or perception of sled dogs will be discussed. The many functions that dogs fulfill indicate their importance in Inuit culture. The individual names of dogs, given the significance of naming practices in Inuit cosmology and spiritual beliefs, suggests the significance of dogs in Inuit culture. The relationship between Inuit and sled dogs is discussed in relation to the distinction between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists suggested by Ingold (1994). Sled dogs are more than more than domestic animals, more than ambiguous; they can be considered as being non-human persons in an Inuit cultural context.

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The Unique Role of Sled Dogs in Inuit Culture

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Human and Non-Human Persons and Dogs

The goal of this thesis is to examine sled dogs in an Inuit cultural context. The sled dog is neglected in the literature focusing on northern hunting people and their relationship to animals or non-human persons.[1] Although the term "person" is generally reserved for human entities in Western culture, other cultures can consider "persons" to be more than just human beings. Hallowell comments:

> While in all cultures 'persons' comprise one of the major classes of objects to which the self must become oriented, this category of being is by no means limited to human beings. (Hallowell 1960: 21)

The reason for calling an animal a non-human person is to emphasize the relationship the animal has with human society according to some peoples' particular perceptions of the natural world. For an observer of subarctic hunting people, Ridington states:

> He or she must be willing to accept that social life and communication among subarctic hunter-gatherers include a wider range of 'persons' than the language and culture of social science generally admit. (Ridington 1990: 114)

The literature about the interaction between humans and non-human persons mainly focuses on the hunter and the hunted. I will argue that dogs can and perhaps should be included in the discussion about the

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[1] Although most authors use the term "non-human persons," Hallowell (1960), uses the term "other-than-human persons," to convey this same concept. The term "non-human person," is used by: Ingold (1988a), Fienup-Riordan (1990), Nuttall (1992), Ridington (1990), Wenzel (1991).

relationship hunters have with animals. The Inuit are hunters and keepers of a domestic animal: namely the sled dog. Sled dogs have different relationships with people, in contrast to wild or hunted animals, and therefore warrant special attention as to how they are incorporated into the relationship between hunters and non-human persons.

In this chapter I will provide a review of the literature on human and non-human person interactions in northern hunting societies. In addition, I will pursue the following questions: what is the relationship of hunters to sled dogs? how are dogs perceived? how is the relationship between hunters and domestic animals (sled dogs) different from the relationship between hunters and animals that are hunted? I will present possible reasons why dogs have been omitted from the discussion of the hunters' relationship with animals. I will explore how dogs can be incorporated into the discussion about human and non-human persons. Furthermore, by focusing on this aspect of the inquiry of dogs and dog teams, I hope to present insights into understanding the importance and value of dogs in Inuit culture. This thesis will focus on the relationship between humans and sled dogs in an Inuit cultural context.

2. Literature on Human and Non-Human Persons

Many researchers have focused on the special relationship between humans and animals. Some authors use the term "non-human persons" to refer to animals because from a non-Western perspective or alternative worldview, animals can be perceived of and treated as persons. To explain the concept of non-human persons, Ingold states:

> If we accept that animals other than human beings may be conscious, intentional agents, then we have also to ascribe to them personal as well as natural powers. That is, we are

> forced to recognize that they embody attributes of personhood which to the West are popularly identified with the condition of 'humanity.' (Ingold 1988a: 9)

Furthermore, Ingold discusses the relationship between people and animals and states:

> These animals can sometimes be regarded as persons, no different from human persons except in their outer garb; so that what we might see- say in hunting- as a confrontation between subjects and objects, or persons and things, they would see as an encounter between persons, and therefore just as much a part of social life as the encounters that take place entirely within the human domain. (Ingold 1986: 13)

Even if the term "animal" is used, the notion of animal is not necessarily the same and it may include properties not usually applied to animals. Researchers describe the relationship between the hunters and animals as being different from the relationship and ideology operating within a Western tradition. Northern hunters (Arctic and Subarctic) are referred to as having a social relationship with animals where the animals operate as persons within the social schema. Of this ideology Nuttall states that: "Animals are seen as having social relations not only with themselves, but also with hunters" (Nuttall 1992: 138). This perception of the connection between people and animals is not recent and commonly reported upon (e.g. Nuttall 1992; Ingold 1980, 1986, 1988 a, b, c, 1994; Fienup-Riordan 1983, 1990; Tanner 1979; Hallowell 1960; Paine 1971; Amoss 1984; Wenzel 1991; Feit 1994; Ridington 1990). Hallowell's work is often referred to in connection with utilizing local/native insight into understand the relationship between humans and non-human persons. Ridington discusses Hallowell's description of Ojibwa thought to include

animals as "persons," and remarks "...he viewed the Ojibwa concept of person as more inclusive than that of the culture that produced anthropology..." (Ridington 1990: 104). Hallowell's perception of Ojibwa thought has brought great insight to the relationship between hunters and animals and offered an alternative view to the conception of "person."

The concepts of reciprocity, sharing, respect, and continuity are important in the perception of animals as non-human persons. Reciprocity is the basis for the interaction between human and non-human actors. Reciprocity can exist in the relationship between the human and non-human persons because the non-human person has volition, will and power. The non-human person may choose not to give itself up to the hunter. Reciprocity is contingent on a notion of continuity. In regarding a hunted animal as a "person," the hunter also believes in a continuity of the animal hunted and an individual's actions can effect the relationship in the future, therefore, the hunter acts with respect. Rasmussen's explanation of why animals allow themselves to be killed involves the concept of continuity and respect:

> ...it must not be supposed that all animals are angered when they are killed. Animals have in reality no objection to being killed by human beings, as long as the rules of life are observed by the latter. It may even happen, and not infrequently, that an animal will approach a human being, actually desiring to be killed by that particular person. An animal may perhaps be tired of being what it is: and since its soul cannot change its envelope until the body has been killed, it is natural that animals should sometimes wish to die. (Rasmussen 1929: 58)

This passage from Rasmussen also highlights the importance of continuity and an understanding of why an animal would give itself up to the hunter.

Sharing and respect are the established and accepted terms of agreement for the interaction between human and non-human persons. In the relationship between humans and hunted animals, both are considered equals. Power does not reside with the hunter but "it resides in the context of his relationship with seals" [and other animals] (Fienup-Riordan 1983: 175). These concepts of reciprocity, continuity, respect and sharing are further explained:

> Hunting and human action within the natural world involves a dialogue and moral interplay with various *inua* [spirit- owner of spiritual power]. In this way hunting is a complex of social relations between humans, animals and spirit owners. I have already made brief references to the idea that seals give themselves up to hunters. The hunter requests that *inua* releases the animals in their care, but in return the hunter must ensure the correct treatment of the animal during death and subsequent butchering, disposal and consumption. (Nuttall 1992: 137)

Reciprocity sharing, respect, and continuity are all operating in the interaction between humans and non-human persons, and some aspects are carried through in the relationship between human persons. For instance, sharing involves the distribution of meat to other human persons. The hunter and the non-human person enter into an agreement where the non-human person's spirit is set free during death and can come back again. Fienup-Riordan discusses the hunters' maintenance of the relationship and its social implications:

> Origin myths recount no prior unity between men and seals but do deal with the achieved status on the part of the hunter through his maintenance of the correct relationship with the hunted, which then allows itself to be captured, butchered, and given away. Just as wealth does not consist of accumulated stores but is produced in the context of a gift-giving relationship, so power does not reside in the hunter himself, but only in the context of his relationship with the seals. Their relationship is the precondition for proper relations between humans. (Fienup-Riordan 1983: 175)

Making a similar point, Wenzel points out how human interaction extends to the natural world:

> Inuit do not segregate the qualities enjoyed by human beings from those enjoyed by animals. Animals share with humans a common state of being that includes kinship and family relations, sentience and intelligence. The rights and obligations that pertain among people extend to other members of the natural world. (Wenzel 1991: 60-61)

Although from different starting points, both Wenzel and Fienup-Riordan illustrate the social connection between humans and animals. The main concepts of reciprocity and sharing, respect, and continuity are important in a relationship with animals and this relationship in turn influences human social interaction.

The theme of human and non-human persons is common in the Circumpolar Arctic. The *human* component of this relationship is easily identified, but the animal or non-human person is questionable. Indeed much of the reciprocity referred to in the relationship between humans and non-human persons is with that hunted animals, they are eaten and shared. In his explanation of the relationship between humans and animals, Wenzel states:

> People, seals, polar bear, birds, and caribou are joined in a single community in which animals give men food and receive acknowledgment and revival. (Wenzel 1991: 61)

Wenzel and other researchers do not mention dogs with respect to the relationship between people and non-human persons. However, if the concept of animal is as a non-human person and if the focus of the operating worldview is on how hunters relate to the hunted, then how are dogs perceived? The goal of my thesis is to understand the role of dogs and how they fit with or into the relationship between humans and non-human persons. Dogs, being a domesticated animal, have been neglected in this discussion of the relationship between hunter and hunted animals.

The discussion about the relationship existing between humans and animals is incomplete without an examination of the domestic animal and the hunter. Dogs are an important animal but hold a different position than wild animals, therefore adding a perplexing component to the human and animal relationship. The concepts of *ownership, domestication* and *domination*, as well as the practice of *naming*, make dogs different from wild animals. Nuttall explores the relationship between hunters and non-human animals and separates domestic animals from other animals:

> ...seals and fish cannot be stolen precisely because animals are not owned by anyone. This is a crucial difference between domesticated and non-domesticated animals and the part they play in the structure of social relations. While certain persons have ownership and control of access to domesticated animals in agricultural and pastoral societies, hunting peoples depend on non-domesticated animals. (Nuttall 1992: 142)

Nuttall omits the fact that dogs are domestic animals that belong to hunters. The dogs are different from other animals because they are owned, controlled and domesticated. These differences may change how the perception of the relationship between humans and animals is perceived, or may broaden an understanding of the complexities involved in the relationship between human and non-human persons.

Dogs in Literature:

> *"The subject of dogs among the Nunamiut would make a book in itself" (Gubser 1965: 289)*

Dogs have not been totally neglected from anthropological discussion but they have often been included in ethnographic and anthropological reports that deal with material culture (for example, The Fifth Thule Expedition Reports), changing economies, modes of production or technology, or general descriptions of Inuit life. However, examining dogs mainly from these perspectives omits the complexities involved in the social relationship between people and dogs. Jensen, in his article the "Folkways of Greenland Dog-Keeping" (1961), comments on the literature:

> In the existing literature about the Eskimo and their life there are numerous examples of the function of sledge-dogs in the traditional culture. As a rule the main weight has been laid on the purely technical side of dog-keeping and sledge-driving- the harness, the sledge and the other technical equipment. (Jensen 1961: 43)

With respect to technology, Ridington points out, "...technology should be seen as a system of knowledge rather than an inventory of objects" (Ridington 1990: 86). Dog teams are not just artifacts; rather they are part

of a complex system of traditional knowledge which involves the care and maintenance of dog teams. In a comparison between dog teams and motorized forms of land transportation, Freeman and Moyer state:

> any discussion that considers the skidoo only as a replacement for the dog severely limits the area of discussion. The dog has a particular place and it is the uniqueness of this place that makes it impossible to speak of them being unplugged from the culture while skidoos are being plugged in. (Freeman and Moyer 1968)

In examining sled dogs it is important to incorporate the social and cultural connections and not simply to compare them on a technical level with alternative options. An examination of the dog requires a greater understanding of the practical and social functions of the dog, as well as the perception of dogs in Inuit culture.

3. Hunter-Gatherers, Pastoralists, and Dog-Team Owners

a. *Trust* to *Domination:*

In the article *"From Trust to Domination: An Alternative History of Human-Animal Relations,"* Ingold uses the relationship to animals, or non-human persons, in order to draw a distinction between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists. To set the context for his argument, Ingold states:

> And the leading premise of my account will be that the domain in which human persons are involved as social beings with one another can not be rigidly set apart from the domain of their involvement with non-human components of their environment. (Ingold 1994: 2)

What Ingold does here is set a condition that animals must be included in order to understand social relationships between people. In describing different relationships between humans and non-human persons, Ingold separates non-human persons into two categories: wild and domestic. Ingold then relates wild and domestic animals to hunter-gatherer and pastoralist modes of existence. Ingold outlines a history of scholarly debate on the definition of wild and domestic animals, and presents competing definitions of domestication. He draws a commonality shared in the definitions and states that in a concept of domestication there is "some notion of human *control* over the growth and reproduction of animals and plants" (Ingold 1994: 3). The premise for a definition of domestication includes a distinction between humanity and nature. In this dichotomy, special attention is given to the social and cultural aspect of humans.

Nevertheless, Ingold also provides another definition of domestication, citing both Ducus and himself: domestication is when animals are considered objects in human social organization and are integrated as such (Ingold 1994). Ingold illustrates that a consequence of such a definition makes domestic animals property and also incorporates an appropriation of nature. Instead of viewing domestication as moving some societies to a higher level in the ladder of civilization, thereby making humans free from nature, Ingold views the distinction between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists in terms of commitments to nature and to other humans (Ingold 1994). Ingold points out that perception of hunters as a group of people who interact with "wild" animals, and lack control over animals is a view from a western standpoint but not necessarily a view shared by the hunters (ibid.).

Moreover, Ingold, in continuing to analyze the relationship between hunters and animals, emphasizes that *trust* is the main principle operating in the activities of sharing and hunting and gathering (Ingold 1994: 12). Ingold correlates the relationship between the hunter-gatherer to that of trust with the animals, whereas the relationship of the pastoralist to their animals is one of domination.

When Ingold discusses domestication he also mentions the social appropriation of nature or creation of a domain separate from humans, something identified as nature. Ingold labels the transition of domestication not from something wild to something domestic, but rather a shift from *trust* to *domination*. Ingold maintains that:

> in both cases, humans and animals are understood as fellow inhabitants of the *same* world, engaging with one another not in mind or body alone but as undivided centers of intention and action, as whole beings. (Ingold 1994: 18)

Ingold asserts that by defining each group by their respective relationship to animals, his division is not an ordered one between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists. His distinction avoids a notion of a "wild" and uncontrolled world in contrast to a world where humans transcended nature and controled animals.

In exploring the relationship of hunter to animals and the role of knowledge in hunting societies, Ingold cites Feit and Ridington. Ingold asserts that hunters use knowledge of animals as a weapon and not as an instrument of control (Ingold 1994: 16). Ingold cites Ridington to explain the relationship of hunter to animal where the hunter develops a relationship with nature, rather than developing control over nature (Ingold 1994: 16; Ridington 1990: 471). Ingold examines how the hunter's

knowledge functions in society, as well as in the relationship with animals in order to establish the notion of trust between hunters and non-human persons.

In contrast to the relationship existing between hunters and animals, Ingold categorizes the relationship between pastoralists/herdsmen and animals as one of control and domination:

> The instruments of herding, quite unlike those of hunting, are of control rather than revelation: they include the whip, spur, harness, and hobble, all of them designed either to restrict or induce movement through the infliction of physical force, and sometimes acute pain. (Ingold 1994: 16-17)

Ingold uses this example to illustrate the notion of domination in the relationship between pastoralists and animals. He demonstrates the difference between the concept of domination and domestication:

> Domination and domestication are here distinguished, on the premise that the one is a form of social control exercised over subject-persons, and the other is a form of mechanical control exercised over object things. (Ingold 1994: 17)

Ingold makes these distinctions in order to clarify the relationship pastoralists have with animals. By ascribing autonomous action to animals, Ingold thereby disagrees with a Marxist concept of domestication, which denies agency to animals. By separating the concept of domination from domestication, Ingold empowers animals. According to Ingold, both hunters and pastoralists can relate to animals as actors within the same world, the main difference being that one is a relationship of trust and the other a relationship of domination.

Beyond the relationship that people have with animals, the relationship extends to how humans relate with other humans. For example, the importance of sharing in a hunting culture further demonstrates the relation of trust not only between animals and humans but also among humans. Similarly, argues Ingold, the relationship of domination of reindeer affects the social organization of herding leaders and assistants.

However, a model of human society that is based upon a clear distinction between groups of people according to their relationships with animals may be challenged in the case of the hunters' relationship to a domestic animal. The sled dog challenges the boundary between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists in Ingold's transition from trust to domination.

b. Is The Dog A Domestic Animal?

The control mechanisms earlier described for reindeer are also applied in the case of the dog. For example, the reindeer have their movement controlled; similarly, sled dogs have their movements controlled. The use of whip and harness to control reindeer are two important tools for controlling a dog team. In Ingold's examples, the means of control pastoralists exercise over reindeer can similar to the forms of control exerted over dogs.

In his brief examination of the domestic dog in *The Appropriation of Nature*, Ingold states:

> .... among maritime hunters of the north Pacific Coast, and throughout arctic and subarctic North America, the only domestic animal of any significance is the dog. Yet we find here precisely the same notion, that man's domination of

> his domestic chattels is akin to that exercised by the spirit masters over various wild species, as a corollary, that the ritual role of domestic animals is as object of bloody sacrifice. (Ingold 1986: 254)

and further, referring to Tanner's work on the Cree and the domestic dog, Ingold concludes that dogs "...have no 'other-than-human' guardian ... Otherwise put, the spirit of the domestic animal is the soul of man, controlling the animal from without" (Ingold 1986: 255). Despite, Ingold's reference to Tanner and Spencer (in his account of the North Alaskan Eskimo), in order to maintain that dogs do not have a soul, this belief may be questioned. Nuttall makes reference to the *inua* or spirit that is present in all animals (Nuttall 1992). In my own field experience, the names of dogs were treated with importance, which may suggest that dogs may possess a spirit. Others have noted the importance of the name-soul complex in Inuit traditional belief (Williamson 1988; Briggs 1971; Balikci 1970). Despite his brief attention to dogs, Ingold does not incorporate dogs into his discussion of hunter-gatherer and pastoralists. Ingold distinguishes hunter-gatherer and pastoralists on the basis of the presence or absence of a dominating relationships to animals, but how useful is this distinction considering hunters have a relationship of domination to their domestic animal the sled dog?

c. Inuit's Relationship To Sled Dogs:

I would argue that the relationship to dogs is necessarily one of *domination*. In order to understand the relationship of people to dogs within an Inuit community, I have first investigated the functions that dogs serve. The functions help in understanding the relationship people

have with dogs especially at a time when technology has changed their former high degree of dependency upon dogs. In addition to functions, I will explore the classification[2] or perception of dogs, and then evaluate the relationship between humans and dogs in Ingold's terms of *trust* and *domination*.

4. Goals and Thesis Overview

My research goal is to understand the place of sled dogs in the relationship between human and non-human persons, as well as the social and cultural importance of dogs today. Fieldwork was conducted from October 1995 to January 1996 in Coral Harbour (*Salliq*), Northwest Territories, Canada. I hope to add insight to the understanding of the relationship between human and non-human persons by examining both the functions and classification of dogs. The relationship between human and non-human persons has special importance in relation to the distinction between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists as indicated Ingold (1994). Consequently, the hunter-gatherer/pastoralist dichotomy presented by Ingold will be critically examined utilizing conclusions about the special category of dogs.

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[2] Classification is used in the sense presented by Amoss, who, following Durkheim and Levi-Strauss, states: "a classification is more than a device to organize experience; it is in some ways a replication or representation of the significant social units of the human group that created it" (Amoss 1984: 293).

Overview:

Chapter Two explores the setting and background for the research area and explains research methods used.

Chapter Three discusses the current situation of dogs and general observations about sled dogs in Coral Harbour. Physical and behavior characteristics of sled dogs are examined. A multitude of factors including changes in breed lines and training have affected the strength, stamina and usefulness of dogs. Characteristics of the owners, economics and resource factors all affect the characteristics of the dogs and number of dog teams in Coral Harbour.

The many different functions of dog teams are explored in Chapter Four. The fact that they are incorporated into many different aspects of everyday existence in the community demonstrates that they are an important element in Inuit life even today. Although some of these functions of dog teams have changed over time, not every function that dog teams served can be replaced. Collectively, the various functions of dogs indicate their continuing cultural importance in an Inuit community.

The classification of dogs is examined in Chapter Five. At times, dogs are included into the human social world. However, certain circumstances increase or decrease the distance of dogs to the human world. For instance, naming, stories and myths, beliefs about dogs' social and kin relationships, and their contributing to the their owners' prestige, places dogs in a closer relationship to the human realm than is the case for other animals.

Dog teams are currently considered important not only because of the functions they fulfill, but also because of the long-standing relationship humans have developed with dogs. Chapter Six explores re-

sponses from interviews regarding the importance of dog teams. As part of understanding the relationship between humans and dogs, it is meaningful to understand the relative importance of dogs to humans.

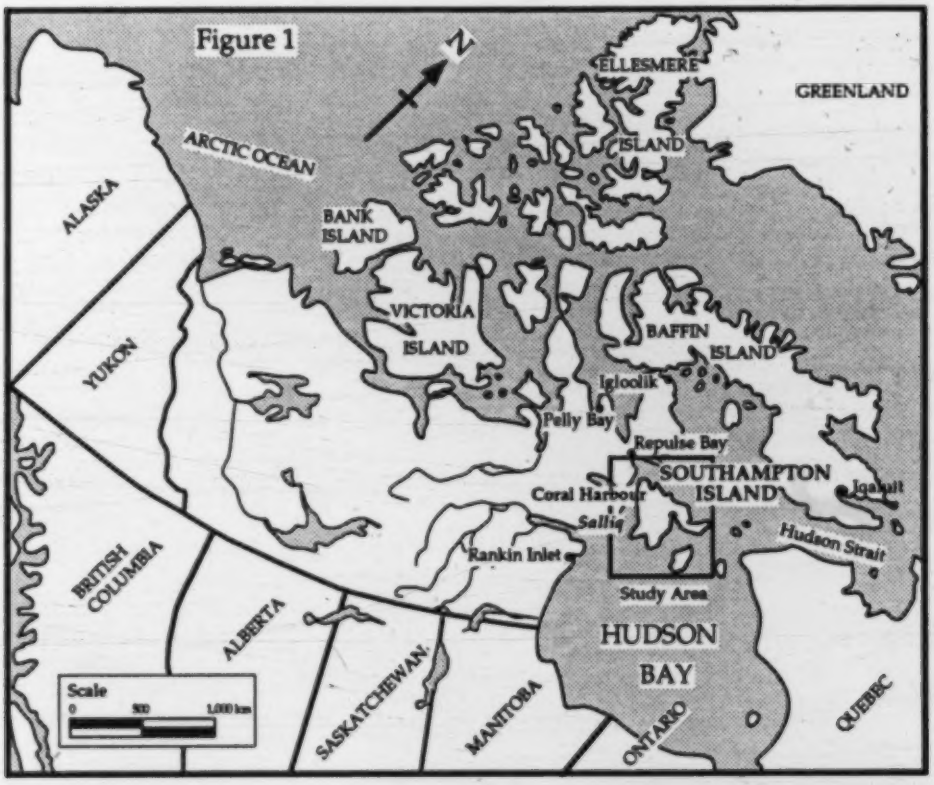
The final chapter, discussion and conclusions, examines dogs as non-human persons in a relationship with humans. The relationship between humans and dogs differs from the relationship existing between humans and other animals. This chapter considers if the relationship between humans and dogs is one of reciprocity and examines the relationship between hunters and dogs using Ingold's concepts of *trust* and *domination*.

II. SETTING AND BACKGROUND and RESEARCH METHODS

Why Coral Harbour? After selecting a small number of potential fieldwork sites, I wrote to several Hunters' and Trappers' Organizations (HTOs), explaining my research plans. I received a call from the president of the Aiviit Hunters' and Trappers' Organization, who stated that he and the HTO board gave their permission for me to study dogs in Coral Harbour. I also received permission from the Hamlet Council. By taking these steps I fulfilled the requirements for my research license in the Northwest Territories and I also entered a community where I knew my project was welcomed.

Coral Harbour (*Salliq*), Southampton Island

Coral Harbour is situated on Southampton Island, in northwestern Hudson Bay. [see figures 1 and 2] Southampton Island is comparable in



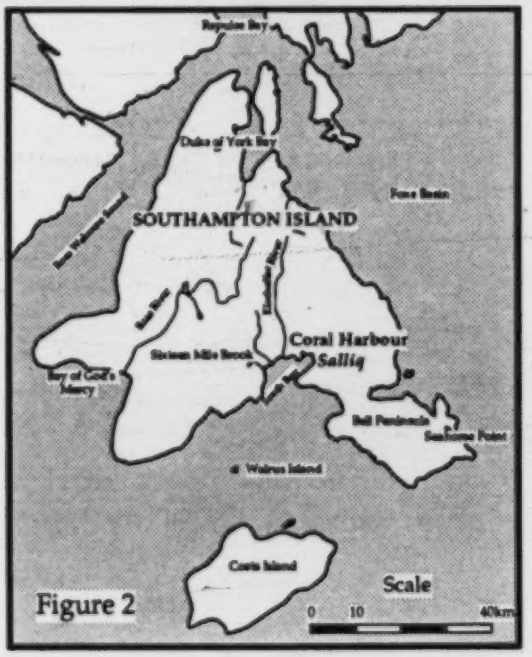


Figure 1 (above) shows the geographical location of SouthamptonIsland at the northern inlet of the Hudson Bay.

Figure 2 (right) focuses on Southampton Island showing the locality Coral Harbour (Salliq).

size to Nova Scotia and Coral Harbour is located on the southern coast of the island. Coral Harbour is located at 83 degrees longitude and 64 degrees north latitude, well above the tree line, and with an Arctic climate. The high temperature for January is -26 degrees Celsius.

The indigenous population of Southampton Island, the Saldlermiut, died out around 1902 or 1903 (Freeman 1969/70; Mathiassen 1928; Moyer 1970; and Sutton 1932 and 1934). Today, the population largely consists of the Aivilimmiut from the west and Uqummiut from the eastern Hudson Strait area, who moved to the island after a fur trade post was established in the 1920s. There continues to exist cultural differences between these two Inuit groups. There might be differences in the traditional knowledge about dogs and dog teams due to the different geographic background of the Inuit on Southampton Island (Shannon 1996: 8). However, most of the residents, with the exception of a few elders, consider themselves as Southampton Islanders.

There have been drastic changes in Inuit lifestyle since the 1960s that have brought about a change in the use of dogs. Prior to the adoption of snowmobiles in the 1960s, dogs were the principal means of transportation for most of the year, and an essential part of Inuit life. Hunters depended on dogs to help them catch game, protect them, for travel and aid in bringing them home safely; for their part, the hunters provided the dogs with food. The move from living in camps to living in Coral Harbour was more than a change in location; it was a change of lifestyle. Initially, people lived in dispersed camps at a number of different locations on Southampton Island; some lived at Duke of York Bay on the northern portion of Southampton Island as well as many different

locations in South Bay, such as at the mouth of the Kirchoffer River. Today, all the inhabitants of Southampton Island live in Coral Harbour.

Coral Harbour was established as a community in 1924 when the Hudson's Bay Company opened a trading post. The airport was built in 1941 as a major military base necessary for shuttling planes over to Europe during W.W.II. During the 1950s and 1960s the community of Coral Harbour was developed with the addition of a school and nursing station: all the Inuit living on Southampton Island were encouraged to move from their camp, into the community as permanent residents. The current population, around 650 people, is a young population with 251 students registered in the school for the 1995-1996 school year.

Research Methods

Research was conducted employing participant observation and formal and informal interviews (Bernard 1988). The combination of these methodological approaches allowed me first to gain a wide range of information on dogs and then later, to ask more specific questions of participants during interviews.

In designing my proposal, I left the research focus broad and flexible. It was my goal to adapt to the particular situation in Coral Harbour and the community's interest in my research. Having received prior permission to conduct my research from both the Hunters and Trappers Organization and the Hamlet Council, upon arrival, I presented my research ideas to both organizations. I was prepared to alter my research after receiving community feedback: principal feedback received, included the suggestion that I return the information to Coral Harbour by leaving a copy of my thesis with Sakku School, Arctic College, The Hamlet, and the

Hunters and Trappers Office. Although, I had hoped to receive more feedback that would enable the project to suit community interests, there was general interest in the project and I was grateful and elated that I had the opportunity to do this research. Furthermore, I was greatly encouraged by the community support.

I used participant observation, formal and informal interviews mainly because I believe that doing fieldwork is a process. Because I was doing cross-cultural research in an Inuit community, I found it necessary to spend time doing participant observation before I started asking more direct questions. In Inuit culture, questions can sometimes be considered impolite. This was my first time in the Arctic, the first time in an Inuit community and my first time doing solo field work. I knew that I needed time to get comfortable in the community and to gain an understanding of appropriate means of conducting my research. In addition, because it was also my hope to involve the community in aspects of the research, I also felt it was important to first use participant observation. By not interviewing immediately, I gained a sense of the current situation of dog teams through observation and also an opportunity to develop appropriate questions.

Radio Call-in Show

In order to accomplish research goals, information must be gathered in a systematic and thoughtful manner. Additionally, one must also convey an understanding of what type of information is desired.

I also used a form of public interviewing. The local radio in Coral Harbour, as well as many northern communities, is a significant medium for effecting community-wide communication. Indeed, local radio is an

important aspect of everyday life, and it also became a significant research tool for me. I must credit the idea to use the local radio to Mr. Ken Beardsal, a researcher and local school instructor, who having questioned me about the methodology for my research project, prompted me to do a 'radio call-in show.'

With help I organized the radio call-in show. A few days before the show was on the air, notice was given that I would conduct a radio show to which people would call in with stories about dogs and dog teams. In order to provide incentive to call in, it was announced that names would be drawn from the participants for prizes. The radio show was carried out in Inuktitut with Ms. Jeannie Jones as my interpreter. Without her encouragement and positive attitude I would never have gained sufficient courage to plan a radio show. I remember being terrified of the possibility that no one would call during the radio show and I would be left speaking alone to the community of Coral Harbour. But the show was a huge success, and due to the heavy stream of calls, the show lasted an extra half hour. I had received 29 callers telling stories about dogs and dog teams.

The radio call-in show gave me exposure to the community and gave the community of Coral Harbour a chance to know a little about my research. From the radio call-in show, I also generated a list of people to contact for formal interviews. One elder called in and stated that he could not think of any story about dogs or dog teams at the time of the radio show, but that he would be happy to do an interview at a later date. The radio call-in show was an excellent way for me to gain exposure in the community, to convey research goals, involve community participation, and generate a list of possible interview respondents, as well as help de-

velop pertinent questions for formal interviews. I still do not know how to label this incredible methodological tool but I would like to thank Ken Beardsal for the idea, Jeannie Jones for encouraging me and interpreting, Emily Beardsal for taping, and Eva Nakoolak for arranging it; everyone involved helped make it possible and enjoyable.

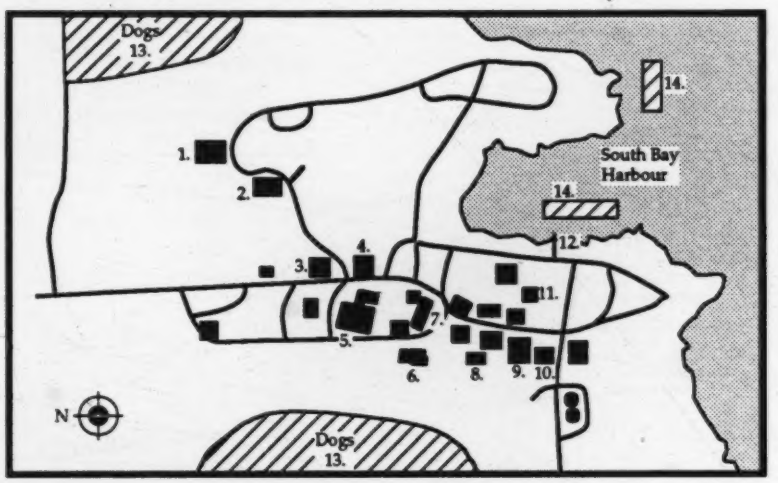
III. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF DOGS IN CORAL HARBOUR (*SALLIQ*)

1. General Observations About Dogs

On my first day in town, I had a meeting with the president of the Hunters' and Trappers' Organization (HTO). He pointed me in the direction of some dog teams. Most dog teams were kept just outside of town. The town planning officer showed me a town planning map which indicated the special area of land where dogs were to be kept. [see figure 3]

There is a small lake at the western edge of town, and across the lake there were about 3 or 4 teams and some puppies. Similarly, some of the dogs are kept on the eastern side of town. Other dogs are kept a few miles away, near cabins. However, the dogs do not necessarily stay in the same location all year and may be moved from season to season. When I arrived in Coral Harbour, the Hudson Bay was still open water, but after about three weeks the harbor froze. The solid ice in the harbor soon became a home for dog teams. The dogs will be moved again in the spring, and if a family goes from town to their camp they will more than likely take the dogs with them.

According to a Hamlet By-Law, adult dogs must be tethered when not in use. There is usually a main line perhaps twenty feet or so long



1. Arena / Community Hall
2. Northern Store
3. Government Office
4. Katudgevik Co-op / Post Office
5. School
6. Health Center
7. Hamlet Office
8. RCM Police
9. Roman Catholic Church
10. Glad Tidings Church
11. Old Mission Church
12. Dock
13. Area to Retain Dogs
14. Area Where Dogs Were Moved on Harbor Ice

Figure 3: Coral Harbour and Areas to Keep Dogs

and off that main chain each dog has about a six foot stretch of chain. Sometimes dogs are allowed to reach another dog on the line, but they are usually spaced far enough to be out of contact. Most dogs are tied by a neck collar hooked to the individual dog chain, but a few dog-team owners did not find this a sufficient way to keep the cunning canines tied down, so an additional rope or wire is tied around the middle.

The Hamlet by-law requires that loose dogs are shot. If a dog is loose, people sometimes go on the radio so that they can find it and tether it. It is important to remember that working dogs in the Arctic are different than pets. Loose dogs are not only a nuisance, but they are also a real danger. There have been instances where people were attacked by dogs and killed or crippled. The dogs sometimes eat peoples' meat stores or kill other dogs.

Tethering dogs has also had considerable effects on the health and behavior of the dogs. Many informants told me that some tethered dogs are not used very often and therefore are more aggressive. Respondents would compare the times when dogs were not tethered, or before snowmobiles when dogs were tied but also used very often. In addition, dogs were often kept in close proximity to humans and therefore were often more tame because of increased contact and training. Currently some dogs in a team are very docile and others very aggressive. Inuit do not value a canine life over a human life, and it is a priority to protect the people in town.

2. The Breeds of Dogs Kept in Town

There are a variety of dogs in town; not all dogs in town are work dogs. There is a distinction made between what is considered a pet dog

and what is considered a working dog. There are a number of pet dogs, and the notion of pet dogs has various meanings. For instance, both the Chihuahuas that live in the house and a husky tied at the harbor some distance from a house, are considered pet dogs. Coral Harbour has a mixture of pet dogs and working dogs. It is my goal to focus on the cultural importance of work dogs and it is beyond the scope of my thesis to explore differences between sled dogs and pet dogs. However, realizing that there are both pet dogs and working dogs in town aids in understanding the classification and categorization of working sled dogs.

3. Sled Dogs- Working Dogs- The Husky

The term "husky" sometimes refers to any northern breed of sled dog and not one specific breed. "Husky" is said to derive from the slang word for Eskimo (Rennick 1987; Coppinger 1977). In a report on the use of dog teams in Alaska, Andersen explained: "Sled dogs in rural communities of the Yukon River drainage, do not fit neatly into one recognized breed, but are generally described as a 'husky-mix' weighing from 30 to 70 pounds" (Andersen 1992: 15). A powerfully built, thick coated dog with medium-sized pointed ears and a bushy tail generally describes a husky.

Although I did not want to focus on the genetics of the dogs, I was interested in what breed of dogs were being kept. In fact, in my first days in town some people suggested that I investigate breed lines. Some people expressed their feelings towards the dogs saying that they were not "real huskies." I often heard the phrases- "real huskies" and "not real huskies," or "mongrels" (meaning mixed breeds or mutts). There was a real distinction between what was considered a good (true) dog team and

what was a mongrel team. In fact, a few dog-team owners started their teams with dogs from other communities in order to obtain a dog team of "real huskies." They did not believe the dogs on Southampton Island were the real huskies anymore, but were now mostly mongrels. There were two people in town that kept Norwegian Elkhounds and their dogs had an influence in the breeding lines of the dogs in town. The black masked face of the Norwegian Elkhound is apparently distinctive. A few people had remarked that they wished that there was a regulation controlling the breed of incoming dogs so that there would not be as many mongrels. News and ideas travel across the Arctic among the Inuit communities, and people in Coral Harbour had heard that other communities regulated the breed of dogs entering the community in order to preserve the "real husky" blood line. In interviews, dogs of the past were often compared with the dogs of today and some people believed that not only had the function, training and use of the dogs changed but also the dogs themselves.

4. Sled Dogs: Dogs of the Past, Current Dogs, and A Time Without Dogs

In understanding what kind of dogs were used by the Inuit, I found that most respondents made distinctions between dogs of the past and the current dogs. To understand the importance of sled dogs I wanted to understand the traits that the people admired in their dogs. In comparing the dogs of the past and the current sled dogs, many important attributes of the sled dog are revealed, as well as some prevailing attitudes towards dogs.

The dogs of the past are compared to the dogs of today and one person, in referring to dogs of the past stated: " they were real huskies - my dad's dogs- real huskies." When I questioned if they looked different from the dogs today, the respondent answered:

> they were bigger and more powerful- like because they were there to be a help their master in everything they did- so they were powerful dogs-they were bigger than the dogs we usually see here.

When talking further with the same respondent, I asked if the dog team was something that should continue as part of the culture. The response was: "Yes, but if I had to try and train one, [a dog team], but I don't like half-breed dogs. That is why I don't have time for them." I questioned further in order to understand what the dogs were mixed with in order to no longer be real huskies. The respondent did not know, but could tell the difference between a real husky and a mixed one by looking, and stated that real huskies are "more alert and their hip is not so down looking." In fact, during informal discussions, many other people mentioned that one could tell the difference between a real husky and a mongrel. Often people pointed out that mixed breeds did not have a straight back, but rather, a downward-sloping one.

There was variation in the answers of the differences between a real husky and mixed breeds. During an interview with Peter Nakoolak, I asked if he hoped future generations would keep dog teams and he stated, "Yeah, it would be nice to have dogs; but it is pretty hard to find a real dog that knows the way yet." Furthermore, he stated: "they are very different today from what they used to have - just by looking at the dog." When I questioned him further and asked him to explain how they looked different, he said that they looked different because they did not

seem to have joints. He explained that their joints seemed too tight like they could not move as well as the dogs in the past. In addition, he noted differences between the ears and tails. In the past, the ears were usually pointed up but today many have floppy ears and dogs also used to have bushier tails and thicker coats than they currently have.

The dogs of the past were used for multiple purposes and training was done not as a chore but as a part of daily life. Perhaps not just the dogs were different but also the situation was different because the dogs were used more frequently. When Timothy Jar described the dogs of the past he reminisced about how incredibly smart the dogs were, and described how the dogs knew the trap lines and would only stop at the master's traps. When I questioned if the dogs looked different, he answered:

> Yeah, I can't really tell how different they are but they are a bit different than before due to that they are not really dogs but they are racing dogs more likely today- than before they were working dogs- they have floppy ears now.

Another elder also talked about the dogs of the past and the dogs today, adding:

> Maybe now-a-days the people are not using the dogs as dog team, like traveling by dog teams so maybe they don't respect them or love them as much as they used to or take care of them as property.

In addition, interbreeding can also make a difference when comparing dogs of the past and dogs of today. When I asked Jimmy Nakoolak (Jimmy-apik) if he ever built a separate igloo for his dogs, he answered that he never did, but:

> The dogs now are mixed breed and they get cold easily and they are not as healthy- the ones that are not full huskies- and you can not go too far with them or anything.

I asked him if there were still full huskies on the island and he observed: "Luke Eetuk has full huskies; he got a female dog from Repulse Bay and that is how he built up his team." Curious as to why Luke Eetuk got a dog from Repulse Bay, I asked Jimmy Nakoolak if the full huskies on Southampton Island had died out. Jimmy Nakoolak answered that there was a time that they died out, mostly due to rabies and people starting to loose their teams around the late 1950s.

There is no one reason why the dogs of the past have changed or disappeared, but perhaps a combination of reasons. I asked Aaron Emiktowt why he thought the numbers of dog teams increased or decreased; was it lifestyle changes, economic changes, or disease of the dogs? He responded by stating:

> lifestyle changes [is the reason for the increase and decrease in dog team numbers] because all people want to do is go on a day trip and go fast- and those real Eskimo dogs, the ones we used to have, are not here anymore.

When I asked what happened to them, he said that the skidoo "overtook" the dogs. Leonard Netser also expressed the view that there was a recent time when dogs were no longer used; he suggested the time period of the mid 1960s to the mid 1980s. When I asked if there were still dogs in town during this time period, Leonard Netser responded by stating that "I think there was no more real huskies- they were- we call them mongrels, so we had to go to other settlements to reintroduce huskies to the town." I questioned where he got his dogs and he stated:

> a lot of them come from Repulse Bay, the real huskies, and I had a Siberian Malamute from Rankin that was bred with real huskies; some pretty good dogs came out, and that's from that malamute there is my current team and a couple of other teams in town from that family line.

In Coral Harbour, there has been a decrease in the use and number of dogs. The floppy ears of some dogs in town or the black-masked face of the ones descended from Norwegian Elkhounds are indicators that many dogs are of mixed breed. It is more difficult to detect whether a dog that looks like a husky is actually a "real husky." One of the qualifications that makes a dog a "real husky" in addition to their physical appearance is their ability to survive the environmental conditions and their work endurance. On an informal basis, I often heard that a person's dogs were not real huskies because they had to have a shelter built for them. According to people in town, a real husky can survive an Arctic blizzard with no extra protection. During an interview with a dog-team owner, I asked if he preferred huskies and if they were a better dog than other dogs found in Coral Harbour. I also inquired if shelters were ever built for the dogs. He replied:

> No, they are tough things, all you have to do is feed them to keep warm, they don't need shelters or anything, just feed them, all they have to be is tied up and fed and they survive.

The real husky is often admired for its intelligence, endurance, and strength; they had to be tough to survive.

The use of dogs has changed, and today they are tethered and not given the same amount of training and exercise as before; therefore they may not be able to perform as they did in the past. The dogs today cannot be expected to find the way home in a blizzard if they have never been on

a trail before. Many of the special abilities of the dogs in the past resulted from their frequent use. Since they were the only means of transportation for most of the year and were used very frequently for hunting and traveling, they were able to find the way home in a blizzard or white out. The training of the dogs was a matter of survival for the hunter and his family.

As lifestyles and settlement patterns have changed for the Inuit, their dogs have also changed. There are many factors such as genetic make-up and breed lines, as well as training, care, and use that have all had an effect on the sled dog. The general notion from many respondents is that the dogs of the past were better than the dogs today. The reasons may be a combination of use, training and the dogs themselves (breed lines). Although there was this general idea that the dogs of the past were better than the dogs of today, a few hunters around age 30 to 35 talked about some of the good dog teams that they owned in the recent past. Understanding the differences between the dogs of the past and current dogs aids in an understanding of the current attitudes toward dogs.

5. The Number of Dog Teams in Town

There was not a constant number of dogs nor dog teams during my three month stay in Coral Harbour. From what I was told, fluctuating numbers of dog teams was not unusual in the recent past.

When asking the president of the HTO (Hunters's and Trappers' Organization) Mr. Samuel Emiktowt, how many dog teams were in town, he did not answer with a number, but rather with a list of prospective dog-team owners. It was apparent that in a small community, keeping track of something is often done on a more personal basis than just

knowing a number. Furthermore, providing an answer to a question about the number of dog teams in town was not easy.

Some individual's names were given with assurance, and others were less certain. Talking with other people in the community in order to know who currently had dog teams, the list of dog-team owners changed, depending on who answered the question. Although having a variable list of who owned dog teams, I was still determined to sort out the "truth," and to produce a definitive list of dog-team owners. However, conflicting information reflected actual fluctuations in the number of dog teams as well as difficulty in defining dog-team ownership. In determining if someone had a dog team, should one count someone that was training six-month old pups that were not quite a developed team? If the six-month old pups counted as a team, then what about the person that was expecting their one-month old pups to be their next dog team; did that person also count as having a dog team? As opposed to counting the number of houses or even number of skidoos, dogs constitute a variable and developing category. In general, there were approximately twelve teams (including young working pups), although, this number would quickly change.

6. Fluctuation in the Number of Dog Teams

The fluctuation in the number of dog teams occurred for many reasons. Disclosing some of the reasons for the fluctuation leads to insight about the current attitude towards dogs and dog teams. Additionally, it also demonstrates what the current functions of dogs may be. There is a great variety of reasons for fluctuation and there are many factors involved in the increase and decrease in number of dog teams. The wide

range of reasons helps explain why the number of dog teams may change so frequently.

The number of dog teams can fluctuate because dogs are sometimes transferred to a new owner due to health reasons of the original owner. I believe that this was a relatively common reason for shifting dog teams. The dogs are not always sold, but are sometimes passed along to other family members. During fieldwork, one man had to sell his dogs to another person. This older man loved to travel by dog team, but he could no longer properly look after the dogs because of his failing health. The dogs were purchased by another man in town who presently owned a dog team. The person who purchased the dogs now either owned one very large team or could be considered to own two teams. Therefore, depending upon how the situation was defined, the number of dog teams could change.

Another dog-team owner used his dog team to guide for a sport hunter (Under Northwest Territories' regulations, sport hunters must hire an Inuit guide and hunt by dog team). However, the sport hunter chartered a helicopter back to town, and the guide returned by snowmobile. It is uncertain what happened to the abandoned dogs; it is most likely that they either died or learned how to hunt and fend for themselves. I asked the former owner of the team if he thought the dogs would survive on their own, but he doubted this possibility. I also asked him if it was possible for the dogs to return to town. He told me it was possible, and recalled a story where someone had lost one dog and it returned a few months later to town. However, when I left in mid- January there were no signs of the dogs.

Although he left his dogs on that trip, he did continue with his interest in dog teams and he even purchased a dog that was pregnant with pups with the intention of starting a new dog team. This new dog was flown in from Pelly Bay. The pups were well cared for and a new team was in the making. These young pups were played with by the owner's children, brought inside the house, given baths and dried before being taken outside again. There was great concern over whether or not the pups were eating and there was great care taken in the feeding of these pups.

I tried to reconcile in my mind how a new team of pups can be treated with such care and a team of adult dogs abandoned. I speculate that the guide left his team there because they were not a good team and he had the desire to return quickly. It is possible that the sport hunter returning to Coral Harbour by helicopter, instead of traveling back by dog team, had an influence on the guide's decision to leave his dogs. In analyzing this situation, it is difficult to omit knowledge of character; this hunter cared for his new pups and his own children with much love and gentleness. However, the circumstances for this hunt and the hunter's reason for abandoning his dog team are unknown. This action appears to reveal a seemingly inconsistent attitude to dogs.

There are other reasons for fluctuations in the numbers of dog teams. Some people in town brought in one dog or a number of dogs from places like Rankin Inlet or Repulse Bay. Sometimes these dog teams start with a pregnant bitch from another community and therefore someone may quickly gain a new team.

Although these new dogs may increase the number of dog teams owned, a litter of pups is no guarantee of a new team. The winters in

Coral Harbour are harsh and survival of pups under winter conditions is uncertain. The dogs must be kept dry and have ample food. Even when great care is taken by the owner, the pups can be found dead and frozen, or attacked by loose dogs.

During my stay, I became friends with a family that was very excited about the possibilities of starting a new dog team. One of their three dogs had a litter of seven puppies. The family cared very well for the dogs, making sure that they would have enough food to stay warm and shelter to keep dry. Originally, the adults thought about giving away or selling a few of the puppies, for 10 dogs was more than enough for a team; however, as is often the case, the children in the family grew attached to all the dogs. As the children came up with a name for each of the pups, the decision was made - all pups would stay. Unfortunately, this hopeful team died when all but one of the pups was killed by their mother. The adults thought that the female dog may now be a danger to humans, as well as other dogs, and she was shot. The family was very sad to lose their prospective team.

One man in town shot all his dogs except his young pups; when asking if I could interview him about dog teams, he stated that he no longer had any dogs. He matter-of-factly stated he had over 30 dogs and shot them all, except the puppies. I am not certain of his reasons for doing this. He said that he got mad at them and shot them. However, others stated that he shot his dogs because he was planning to sell the fur. It is not certain if this action was based upon an economic decision or an emotional response, or whether both were reasons for shooting the dogs. Importantly, it also points out another function of dogs; the fur is often utilized and provides warm clothing.

The fluctuation in the number of dog teams is not a new occurrence and the number of dogs and dog teams has fluctuated with resources, economics, anticipated or actual trapping returns, and technology. The amount of dog food that could be obtained affected the size and number of teams. Trapping provided an economic incentive to have a relatively large team (around seven dogs) and for more people to have their own teams for traveling trap-lines. Although, the snowmobile is the technology that has most obviously affected the number of dogs, the Peterhead boat had a great influence on the amount of dog food that could be caught (Freeman 1969-70). The Peterhead boat made it easier for a hunter to procure walrus and therefore support a larger dog team. With the Peterhead boat there was increased security for being able to provide enough dog food to maintain a team. The snowmobile has had a considerable effect on the fluctuation in the number of dog teams. The snowmobile is widely utilized in order to compensate for living as a permanent town resident (Wenzel 1992). Although, the number of dog teams fluctuated during my stay in the field, the number of dogs has fluctuated with larger trends in changing Inuit lifestyle, and the fluctuation in number of dogs is not new nor uncommon.

IV. THE FUNCTIONS OF SLED DOGS

'A dog team won't break down'

In order to understand the relationship between hunters and dogs it is important to understand the various functions that dogs currently fulfill in Inuit society. The relationship between hunter and animals or non-human persons, is one of reciprocity. To examine the relationship

between hunters and dogs it is important to comprehend the usefulness of dogs to humans. It will also be important to understand the role that dogs play in Inuit culture. In order to understand the social and cultural importance of dog teams, it is essential to understand what purposes dog teams currently serve.

Before conducting formal interviews, people were asked informally if they have gone out on the land by dog team, and what they enjoyed about dog-team travel. Many people recollected fun times and shared memories of traveling by dog team; people liked to go by dog team because it was *fun*. Others commented on how peaceful it was to go by dog team, stating that it was not noisy, like traveling by skidoo. Some remarked that the dog team was a cheaper means of traveling and more reliable than traveling by skidoo. There were positive feelings about dog-team travel even expressed by people who did not keep a dog team.

Many of the dog team functions reported in interviews are not specific to Coral Harbour, but occur in other Inuit communities in the Arctic. The necessity of owning dog teams has diminished with the increased use of the snowmobile, but some of the earlier functions remain. However, snowmobiles cannot completely replace all the functions of a dog team. In order to evaluate these changes, it is important to understand the functions fulfilled by dog teams in the past in comparison with the current functions.

1. Transportation

The first and most obvious function of a dog team is as a means of transportation. Dogs were the only form of land or sea ice transportation

before the snowmobile. In one of the Fifth Thule Expedition Reports, dog-team travel and sleds are categorized under the topic of 'Communication.' (Birket-Smith 1945). The snowmobile was introduced in the Arctic in the 1960s, and since then snowmobiles have become widely adopted, causing the number of dog teams, and hence the number of dogs owned, to be reduced. Yet, dogs are still a viable alternative form of travel and snowmobiles have not completely replaced the dog team. There are certain advantages to using dog traction for transport; these include safety and protection, the high cost of purchasing and repairing snowmobiles, as well as expense of gas and the risks of a breakdown. Dogs are considered a reliable, safe and inexpensive form of travel, even though they are not the fastest or most frequently used method of travel today.

2. Aid in Hunting

Dogs were often an aid to hunters, especially before the use of rifles. Even after rifles were widely in use, many elders talked about their dogs' ability to sniff out breathing holes for seals, or how their dogs would aid them in bear hunting. A hunter can use his dogs as an extension of his own senses. One elder commented on the importance of dogs in hunting:

> They [dogs] are really a help because they help find where the animals are [at]. They [dogs] can smell other animals and they are important in hunting.

When seal hunting, sometimes only one or two dogs were separated from the rest of the team to sniff out the breathing hole. However, others told me that the entire team was used and that when the dogs were well

trained they would go past the hole, and the master would get off the sled at the hole and the dogs would continue. This method was thought to trick the seal into thinking that the hunter had continued on past the breathing hole. Graburn mentions that dogs were often a 'nuisance,' when seal hunting (Graburn 1969) Similarly, one elder emphasized that the dogs had to be well trained in order to go seal hunting, because there were times when the dogs were very 'anxious' and therefore made seal hunting difficult. Despite these problems, dogs were still used in hunting. Balikci states that, the role of dogs in seal hunting was crucial and that the hunter relied on dogs' sense of smell to find the breathing hole (Balikci 1970: 73). Many authors writing about the Inuit mention the use of dogs for hunting, including, e. g., Nelson (1969), Balikci (1970), Graburn (1969), Degerbøl and Freuchen (1937), Stefansson (1919), Birket-Smith (1936), and Rasmussen (1908), among others. The dogs often aided in hunting, although they were not usually trained by the owner to hunt. Respondents usually stated that the older dogs trained the younger dogs. Currently, some residents still hunt by dog team and importantly dogs are currently used in guiding for sport hunts.

3. Fur

Dog fur is considered as a useful commodity; it is used as a parka trim (*nuilak*), for mitts, the outside portion of *kamiks* or seal skin boots, (this outerwear is called *tuktuqutiik*) as well as other clothing. At the beginning of my stay, people were tentative about telling me that they used dog skins for clothing. Although everyone in town knew that I was studying something about dogs, they were not sure about my research fo-

cus nor my reaction about the use of dog. When newly in town, I was invited to speak to Arctic College students about my research. This opportunity allowed the class an opportunity to question me, and one of the adult students asked me if it "grossed me out" that they used dog fur for mitts and parka trims. I answered no, and that I knew the fur was used and thought it would be quite warm. Another instance occurred that illustrates a hesitation to tell me about the use of dog fur. In an Inuk home, I asked what kind of fur trimmed a beautiful seal skin coat. The woman hesitated in answering and then stated that it was dog. The Inuit were aware that I might have a different attitude towards fur and the use of animals and were tentative in telling me they used dog until they knew more about me and my project.

In an interview with a dog-team owner, he confirmed that dog fur made the warmest mitts, saying: "Yeah they do make warm mitts- the warmest anyway to my knowledge." Many people in town told me that dog made the best hood trim or *nuilak* because it does not absorb the moisture like other furs. Another respondent stated:

> [dog fur provides the best fur trim...] because they have a thick hide compared to foxes or wolves and they don't get wet as easily.

Graburn also comments on the use of dog for parka trim and states that it is next best to wolverine and wolf skin (Graburn 1969: 44). It is noteworthy that Southampton Island does not have wolverines and few wolves, (which were said to have come over to the island about two years ago from the mainland); therefore dog skin was the best available parka trim. Nelson also mentions that mittens made from dog skin are preferred over mittens made from caribou, since dog skin has better moisture resis-

tance and wears better (Nelson 1969). I tried on a pair of dog mitts outside on a day when it was minus 26 degrees Celsius and my hands momentarily regained their warmth inside these borrowed mitts. I was also told that they make a very warm outside portion to *kamiks* (seal skin boots) and that they are also used for wind pants.

In order to better understand the function and utility of dog fur, I decided to make mitts from dog skin. In response to my request over the local radio and that I was looking to purchase a dog fur, about four answers were received, and I purchased one skin for $75.00 (Canadian). Diane Nester patiently taught me how to work the thick black fur, cut the patterns and sew the stitches. I am indebted to her for her patience and wonderful ability to instruct me. This experience was a perfect way to learn the value and use of dog fur in the Arctic.

My dog-trimmed sealskin mitts changed many peoples' outlook towards me. When I first wore them, someone said to me, "Well Kerrie, I guess you are not with Greenpeace." Many were aware that a *kabluna* (white person) might have a different attitude to fur. An Inuk friend of mine, nicknamed me *Cruella*, after the character of Cruella De Vil in the Disney movie, *One Hundred and One Dalmatians* who tries to make a coat from the Dalmatian puppies.

Furs and skins are critical for staying warm in the Arctic, and part of the ideology is not to waste anything. On respondent stated why he used dog fur:

> If I had a dog that has gone bad like maybe [it was] beat up by another dog- I will shoot it and keep the fur- You don't waste it.

Dog fur is well utilized and provides much needed warmth out on the land or even traveling across town in the winter months. The fur provides an important justification for keeping dogs in the Arctic.

4. Release of Emotions

Anger is often controlled and curbed in Inuit culture (Briggs 1970). A young hunter explained to me one reason he liked having dogs is because he could get real mad at them. There is sometimes a release of aggression towards dogs and someone can vent their anger at the dogs rather than another person. A dog-team owner jokingly told me that he was given the advice to never take a rifle with him when he went out on the land to train his dogs because he would end up walking back (having in frustration, shot all the dogs). Earlier [Ch. 3, sec. 6], it was stated that there was a man in town that shot all his dogs, either because he was mad or because he needed the money from the furs, or possibly for both reasons. Although the definitive reason why he shot his dogs remains unknown, one reason stated was because the dogs made him mad. This was not the only incident where I learned how dogs made a person angry. A young hunter told me how angry he can become at the dogs, recounting a story of traveling back to town on his brother's dog team:

> When it was time to get going back home, he let me use his dogs and I got so mad, I get mad about it still. I nearly shot most of his dogs. I can't even explain it still because I get so mad- I had never got that mad in my life before- I got very mad- I did.

Dogs must learn to obey the owner's commands. Training dogs is challenging, and the dogs can test a person's temper. As the dog-team owner becomes older and learns how to control his anger there is less release of

anger towards the dogs. One dog-team owner talked about his initial interest in dogs and recalled:

> Well I got interested when I was about 8 years old and I used to go out on a hunt with my uncle and he had great big dogs and I used to love going out with them - I learned a lot of patience from a dog team.

I was often told that a good dog-team owner had to be in control to command the dogs. Some dog-team owners told me that if a person beat his dogs too much, then he would not have a good team. I was also told that the whip is the most important tool in training dogs, but that the whip must be used properly. The whip was used to exercise control over the dog team and primarily used in training; one did not beat the dogs without reason. A relatively young dog-team owner stated that he did not use a whip because he did not know how to use it. He stated that he was told by an elder that he should only use a whip when he could use it properly. The dog team can be a way for someone to vent built-up anger and to learn how to control anger. Gubser describes how Numamiut men and women release anger and vent frustrations on the dogs. He remarks: "Some Numamiut are quite aware that dogs function as a limited psychological escape valve" (Gubser 1965: 292). This ability to vent anger at the dogs can affect the social interactions amongst people in the community. In his study examining the relationship between the Hare Indians and dogs, Savishinsky explains that a reason for the social importance of the dog among the Hare is to relieve the pressures of suppressing anger by taking it out on the dogs rather than on people (Savishinsky 1974).

5. Fun

Some people had a hard time expressing why they liked going by dog team. Respondents stated that it was fun and enjoyable. There is an indescribable quality to traveling by dog team. I believe it has to do with the spontaneity and energy generated by the dogs and it can be very peaceful to travel by dog team. From personal experience I thoroughly enjoyed my times out on the land by dog team.

There are many reasons why people thought that it was fun to travel by dog team. Snowmobiles cannot replace the enjoyment some people find in dog-team travel. One elder added in an interview, "I still like traveling by dog team and I wish that I still could." In addition, one couple kept a dog team around mainly for pleasure travel. They liked to travel by dog team especially in the spring time and they used the dogs because it was a fun hobby, primarily for travel.

When telling people that my research involved dog teams, without any further questions people often volunteered that they thought it was fun to go by dog team. Especially, women told me how much they enjoyed dog team rides in the springtime.

6. Racing

Dog team racing in Coral Harbour is presently for merriment and is part of the Christmas festivities. Racing in some Arctic communities has become a more serious sport. In Coral Harbour, the working dogs were the dogs raced. The working dogs are different from racing dogs (Central Alaskan Huskies are the most common racing dog) used for races such as the Yukon Quest or the Iditarod. The dogs that are used for these highly

competitive races are very different from working dogs in appearance and attributes due to the different functions they perform.

The Christmas dog team race was in the spirit of fun. There were only four dog-team owners that participated in the Christmas race in 1995; the winner of this race was Luke Eetuk, who also won the previous year's race. I asked Luke Eetuk whether he traveled to race in other communities and he stated "I only went to Rankin that one time and that was when I found out that you need racing dogs instead of working dogs."

Only one person kept racing dogs in Coral Harbour. Interestingly this man had recently moved to Coral Harbour from Rankin Inlet, where dog team racing appears to be more competitive. Because most of the dogs in Coral Harbour are working dogs, I often heard teasing about these racing dogs. For example, one person stated "When people get teams for racing and recreation they get those little dogs with hardly any fur and we make fun of them." The teasing was usually verbalized in comments like; 'those dogs are not real huskies, they are whimpy dogs because they must have shelters built for them.' In Coral Harbour racing, at least presently, racing is not a primary reason for keeping a dog team in Coral Harbour.

7. Cultural Aspect

Dog teams are more than just a form of transportation; they are an integrated part of Inuit life. Some respondents commented on the cultural importance of dog teams. Leonard Nester expressed what he enjoyed about dog team travel:

> I find it very pleasurable to go out on dog team to the lake and catch fish- it's fun and exciting, really in touch with the old times. Yeah it is more fun than going by skidoo.

When I asked Noah Kadlak to explain the benefits of a traveling by dog team, he stated:

> The benefit of it is that you get to watch the land and you get to learn how our ancestors used to do at that time and to myself, I learn lots just going out by dog team.

Both these respondents felt there was value in learning about dog teams for it was a connection with their past and their culture. Noah Kadlak attached special attention to the benefit of watching the land. The speed of travel by snowmobile has changed the contact with the land. Noah Kadlak also stated, "I prefer to go out by dog team because- you get to learn all the things that you have to learn- going by dog team." Some people find enjoyment in learning the skills of running a dog team and learning about their traditional way of life. These statements indicate that dog teams were beneficial for continuing a valued tradition.

8. Responsibility/Something To Do

In order to categorize this particular benefit or function of dog-team ownership, I use the phrase most often used in relation to it, namely that respondents liked to have a dog team because it was "something to do." When I asked a dog-team owner about his team he stated:

> Those dogs we have right now -I like them, they give me something to do and I just like them.

This phrase, "something to do," is a composite of different social concepts and includes the idea of responsibility and personal challenges and a

sense of accomplishment. Sometimes mothers with sons would state that it gave their sons something to do. Other people mentioned that it was something to do while they were unemployed. The couple that kept a dog team for pleasure travel also explained that they enjoyed dogs because it was something to do. Coral Harbour has no movie theaters, no coffee shops and no bars, and dog team care and use take a lot of time and energy. Training a team is a purposeful activity and a task that allows a person to see their energies rewarded as the team grows and learns. In this respect, the dogs provide a personal challenge. Dogs are no longer essential in transportation and hunting and, therefore, the responsibility of a dog team is a choice rather than a necessity. There were a few young hunters that took on this responsibility for the father's dog team. Taking care of dogs is a big job and the dogs are dependent upon that person.

9. Using Spare Meat

Earlier, the issue of reciprocity between hunter and the animals hunted was discussed. It is respectful to utilize the entire animal that is killed for food. Dogs can be fed whatever edible parts of an animal that remain, therefore no part of an animal is wasted. In a report on the hunting economy in the Cumberland Sound area, it was stated that the change to snowmobiles from dog teams had adverse effects on the utilization of seal meat (Haller 1967). In Coral Harbour, in response to the question whether dogs were important in utilizing an entire animal, a dog-team owner responded:

> Yeah, for sure, when people don't have dogs, a lot of the meat they use is scraps and it's wasted and even pet dogs, they will use all of the scraps.

Additionally, I observed that one household that did not own a dog, when they were finished butchering the seal, by-products were fed to the neighbor's dog. There is no waste of meat when dogs need to be fed. Even if a person does not own dogs, a family member or neighbor may have dogs.

10. Connection to Human Health

Although this belief is not shared among all Inuit, some believe that there is a connection between health and sickness in humans and dogs. In his article, "Adaptive Innovation Among Recent Eskimo Immigrants in the Eastern Canadian Arctic," Freeman mentions that Inuit from Port Harrison (relocated to Grise Fiord) believe in a correlation between the health of a person and of dogs, whereas this belief is not shared by the Inuit from Pond Inlet, also living in Grise Fiord (Freeman 1969). Taylor explores the connection between heath and ritual killing of dogs in Labrador. He questions whether canicide is sacrificial killing or if the dogs can be a malevolent spirit (Taylor 1993). Taylor draws upon incidents from Labrador and quotes such explanations for killing dogs as; "...the dog should die instead of him," and "...her dog should not be livelier and healthier than herself" (Taylor 1993: 7).

Similar to Freeman's and Taylor's accounts, some respondents expressed a belief about the connection between human heath and canines. The general notion is that when a sickness would come to a household it would be better if the sickness was taken by dogs or a dog rather than by any of the people. One elder explained:

> My father used to tell me always to have a dog because sometimes sickness came to the household but the dog took it

> from the people in the house; he used to tell me always to have a dog around the house.

Furthermore, during another interview my interpreter explained that the reason some people keep a dog was because they were told by parents or elders to always have a least one dog around, in case of sickness. According to some people's beliefs, dogs can function to protect human health.

In a different manner, Jensen mentions a connection between dogs and human health. He reports about the notion that dogs should not be beaten for biting a human. If the dog was beaten the wound would become worse because the *inua* [spirit] of the dog would be angry. He also mentions how some Inuit use hair from the dog to dress the wound of a dog bite (Jensen 1961).

11. Weather Predictor

Dog behavior can be used to predict some weather conditions. Due to the availability of broadcast meteorological forecasts, weather prediction may not be as important a function of dogs as it was in the past. Inuit depended a great deal on their dogs in daily life and an extensive body of traditional knowledge has been constructed around dogs. I was repeatedly told that the onset of a storm could be predicted by dog behavior. The dogs would get up and shake, as if they were shaking snow from their backs. There would be no snow on the dogs but this action was an indicator of the snow storm to come. Respondents invariably told me that the dogs would get up and howl and jump around in excitement for the storm's end. In Nelson's account, the dogs howl to indicate the onset of the storm and the end of the storm (Nelson 1969: 46). The dogs were an

active part of human life and their behavior became incorporated into traditional knowledge about predicting storms.

12. Safety

A consideration when traveling by dog team is safety. When weighing the advantage of dog teams as opposed to skidoo I often heard that it was much safer to travel by dog team. The Arctic with its extreme temperatures necessitates that you pay attention to your personal safety, because carelessness could have fatal consequences. Because of the extreme temperatures, keeping warm becomes an issue of safety and not simply one of comfort. I often heard that traveling by dog team was much warmer because, while traveling, one could easily leave the sled and run alongside it, therefore raising the body temperature.

Dogs are important for their extra senses and their ability to find the way home or find a temporary camp. Respondents told stories during the radio call-in show and during interviews about how their dogs found the way home during a blizzard or white out. Nelson also indicates this valued ability of dogs in Alaska, as well as relating a personal experience where dogs were relied upon to find the way home (Nelson 1969).

Another factor in safety is traveling on ice. Thin ice can present great danger in traveling. Dogs are much safer when traveling on thin ice for they can detect the danger and can disperse their weight or refuse to cross unsafe areas. In addition, the logistics of how one travels by dog team is safer on ice, the person is on the sled positioned behind the dogs, whereas on a snowmobile the driver is in front of the sled and the first to cross or fall through dangerous ice. The fan hitch used in the eastern Arctic is ideal for traveling on ice because the dogs can disperse their

weight and if a dog does go through the ice the entire team is not endangered.

Reliability becomes an important factor with respect to safety. Today a snowmobile is a lot more reliable than when first introduced in the 1960's, yet the reliability of a dog team may still be greater. When speaking with an elder, it was important for me to recognize that he or she may be comparing the dogs of the past with snowmobiles of the past. According to most elders, dogs were always more reliable than a snowmobile despite the recent improvements to machines. Yet, dogs today are not used as much and therefore may not seem very reliable to the young hunters, whereas they may perceive their skidoos as being very reliable. I found this conflicting opinion on the reliability of method of travel very interesting. The differing opinion between generations may also be attributed to the amount of experience with each technology.

Despite the tendency of the younger, more prosperous and experienced hunters to trust the reliability of the snowmobile, there were still a few younger hunters that trusted dog traction more than skidoo travel. I often heard the statement, 'when you are out on the land, dogs don't break down.' The snowmobile may be more reliable now, compared to the past, but there is still a risk that it may break down.

In addition to generation and experience, the individual's financial status also has an influence on the question of reliability. Although many things in an Inuit community are shared, there are economic differences between families. Someone with a new $12,000 skidoo may be of the opinion that snowmobiles are very reliable, and someone with an older less expensive model may not agree. There were some hunters around the same age and relatively similar exposure to dog-team use, yet

they had differing opinions about the reliability of snowmobiles. When a respondent states his or her opinion of reliability of snowmobiles, it is meaningful to consider the quality of the snowmobile owned.

13. Protection

Protection is another function that dogs can provide, most significantly protection from polar bears. Humans are part of the food chain on the tundra, and polar bears have been known to enter camps and be aggressive to humans. During interviews, people often mentioned the protection and warning that dogs provided.

Joanassie Nakoolak, an accomplished hunter, stated in an interview, that it was better to travel by dog team because of the extra protection they provide at night. The dogs warn if anything is coming and a person can sleep without being worried.

Other people stated that it was safer to go bear hunting by dog team. Even if the person goes bear hunting by snowmobile, one dog may be brought along to provide warning of a bear.

When I asked Noah Kadlak if he took a dog on his bear hunt he stated:

> Yes, I take one dog every time that I go out - just to be in a safe place- like there was this guy here, I was going out with - if he did not have a dog when they were camping - they were setting up a camp and there was a bear- when it was dark- the bear was coming towards them to the camp- they had a dog. Luckily that dog went right to that bear and those people found that there was a bear right near them. So it is good to have a dog every time when you are going out bear hunting or when you are going out in the land by snowmobile. To me ...-I feel a lot safer having a dog out in the land.

This protection and warning can be performed by one dog, but is certainly better if there is a dog team. Johnny Nakoolak, another hunter who grew

up during the time when dog traction was the only form of transportation, stated that he often took one dog out when hunting, for safety and protection. The interpreter mentioned that Johnny's dog was very active towards bears. Johnny shared a hunting story:

> There was a time that the bear season opened and we went out to Seahorse Point and this dog was down there, and there was my brother- my younger brother-we were starting to set up camp when it was getting dark and that dog rushed that bear and that bear was coming towards the camp- that dog was the warning.

Jimmy Nakoolak (Jimmy-apik), another hunter, also shared an experience where his dogs provided good protection:

> One time I camped out and a bear had come and my dogs were keeping the bear in control- I could not see the bear but I could see the dogs - it was very tense time- because it was dark and I had no light. I shot the bear - all I could see was the outline of the bear. I could not see the bear but the outline where the flippering of the fur in the little bit of twilight or whatever and I got the bear in the dark.

Jimmy Nakoolak's story points to the incredible dangers that bears represent. They do enter camp and pose a real threat to human life.

Arnakudluk Shimout talks about the dogs being an aid to the hunter and helping to warn against bears. Timothy Jar also mentions that the dogs provide support and protection. He stresses the importance of this extra protection because when he used to travel by dog team he was often alone. When dog traction was the only means of transportation, hunters often went out alone, sometimes for even more than a week. The dogs provided companionship, as well as greatly needed protection.

Erksuktuk Eetuk is another hunter that takes his one dog with him bear hunting and he always takes his dog to spring camp for the protection of the family: "In spring you always have to have a dog for camp especially when there is family going out camping." Veronica Ell mentions that when hunters used to go out bear hunting, the women at home did not worry because they knew that the dogs knew how to handle a bear and that the dogs would provide protection against a bear. Furthermore, when I asked if she ever takes just one dog along, she answered:

> Whenever possible when women are going out they try to make sure and bring a dog as means of protection, and every-time they go down to Coats Island during the summer they always make sure they bring a dog and then they make sure and keep the dog right by their tent because there is always bears down there. And there is different types of barking- like a dog can just bark but once it sees a bear or senses a bear - the barking changes and the people know right way there is a bear.

Women sometimes expressed the view that dogs provide protection. During an interview I asked how old the dogs became and what happened when they could no longer pull a sled. The respondent stated that, "they would use them up to five years old but when they were getting too old they would leave them in town with the women and the women would be protected by them." The retired sled dogs provided protection for the women who remained at home while the men left hunting.

Although one dog can provide the warning of a bear approaching a camp, a dog team may still provide extra protection. When I spoke to hunters about bear hunting, they seemed to be of the opinion that it was safer to do such a hunt by dog team. The dogs can be a great aid to the hunter. Before firearms were used in hunting, dogs enabled a hunter to

kill a bear and were an essential element of safety on a bear hunt. Some dogs were usually released from the *kamotik* (sled) and allowed to chase the bear. The dogs could run the bear into exhaustion and allow the hunter to kill the bear while the dogs were distracting it. The dogs and the man worked together to hunt the bear. This technique continued to be used after rifles were introduced, because bears could out run a dog-pulled sled in rough ice.

I asked if there were techniques used in training dogs to hunt bears and every person responded that they did not have to teach the dogs to hunt bears. The respondents stated that sometimes a new dog would learn by watching the older, more experienced dogs, but all were in accordance that dogs were not trained to hunt bear. However, Jimmy Eetuk stated there was a way to make dogs become more keen to hunt bears. He mentioned that if puppies were fed a certain portion of bear meat, then the dogs would become more aggressive toward bears and would be better at hunting bears. (The bear meat was the portion next to the liver, probably the diaphragm; my interpreter explained that the meat was bluish in color.) The ability of dogs to hunt bears was considered a natural ability of the dogs and not something that Inuit (at least presently) believed they could train a dog to do. Although, not every dog is a good bear hunter, all dogs do provide extra protection on the land.

14. Exploring the Function of Guiding

There is a Northwest Territories' law that requires polar bear sport hunters to hunt by dog team using a local guide. A benefit would be that a sport hunter will contribute to the local economy. Guiding may not be the only reason for keeping dogs, but it may provide an economic incen-

tive. Furthermore, many current dog-team owners were also guides for sport hunters. Most dog-team owners assert that they do not keep dogs for guiding, but guiding does provide an economic opportunity to utilize a dog team. During interviews, I asked respondents if guiding influenced people toward maintaining dog teams. Because the function of guiding is the result of a Northwest Territories law, I also asked respondents their opinion of the law that the sport hunters must be taken out by dog team; responses to both questions varied greatly.

a. Is Guiding An Incentive For Keeping Dogs?

I wanted to understand the incentive for men to act as guides. When I questioned one dog-team owner, he answered that the incentive was money. But when I asked him if some people kept dogs in order to take out sport hunters, he answered:

> Mostly yes, but dogs are just nice to have around and I am not a guide and if I was anyway, I would probably not have any dogs, just like how some of those guides just left their dogs.

I am unsure if he was referring to the incident that occurred where his own dogs were used for a sport hunt, with another man guiding, and left at the camp to be picked up a week later by himself, his brother and me. He also could have been referring to a separate incident where a different guide abandoned his dogs in the northern portion of the Island (as was mentioned in an earlier section of this thesis). Although he said he personally would not be a guide, his dogs were used by another man to take out a sport hunter.

A common theme I found when interviewing dog-team owners was that they often said they may guide for sport hunters, but personally

that is not the reason why they kept their dogs. The respondent would often tell me that *others* in town kept their dogs for the sole purpose of guiding. I never found these *others*, for not one dog-team owner and guide told me that he kept his dog for the purpose of guiding.

A second dog-team owner stated his opinion on the influence of sport hunters upon others' decisions to own dogs and the consequent possibility of being a guide. He remarked "yeah I think that is the main reason- most of the guys have dogs right now but that is not my main reason I have got my team." In accordance, a third dog-team owner was asked if he thought that some people were keeping dog teams for sport hunters, and he stated:

> Not me, I have been doing it for 15 years and its not the sport hunters that keep my dog team going- its that I like it and I learn from it and my traditions, but those sport hunters just go along with me because I had dogs for a long time and when I have asked I go with the sport hunters

A similar attitude was expressed by a fourth dog-team owner who recently received his father's dogs:

> My dad just enjoyed dogs- so he just started it up again himself- he does not do any sports hunt - but I think that is one of the reasons - the main reason they are coming back so that people can go back to their way of traveling but still make money - with sport hunters.

Later during the interview, this fourth dog-team owner specifically addressed the influence that sport hunt guiding had and stated:

> People are more interested in them [the dogs]; they were gone before and did not exist anymore from this town then- right now they are making a come back because of these sport hunters.

I often asked respondents why there might be a fluctuation in the number of dogs in town and some respondents replied that guiding sport hunters renewed an interest in dogs. Despite the fact that most dog-team owners stated they kept their dogs for various reasons other than guiding, in general guiding was thought to have sparked peoples' interest in dogs again.

b. Opinions On The Law:

In addition to asking about the influence guiding had on people maintaining dog teams, I also asked people's opinion on the Northwest Territories' law that required the use of sled dogs on sports hunts. Some of the responses about the law were positive. The sixth dog-team owner I spoke with, thought it was a good law because then the dog-team owners might get money. The fourth dog-team owner stated that he thought the law had advantages; one advantage he mentioned was that "the guy will not get stuck anyway, he will surely come home to a camp- that is the advantage." (It is unclear when he says *guy* if he is referring to the sport hunter or the guide or perhaps both; regardless, the advantage refers to the issue of safety). The fifth dog-team owner thought that it was a good law for sport hunters to go out by dog team. He stated that:

> One of the main reasons why that law became [a law] is because they wanted us to maintain our culture and continue to use dogs, which is good.

With a similar attitude towards Inuit cultural traditions, the third dog-team owner stated:

> It is a very good law ...because it's an experience for the sport hunter of how it is- it is not just going out-going out to get a bear- it is teaching that sport hunter how you have dogs and to show our culture of how we do it.

These previous two statements emphasize dog teams as part of a cultural tradition.

In contrast, other respondents disagreed with the law that the sport hunter be taken out by dog team. For example:

> Personally no- because when we take sports hunts out and we are not really up for it and the dogs are going one point one miles per hour and the dogs are getting slower and lazy and its quite tough. It is really hard because they are not healthy - cause the snow is just falling and they had a long summer rest and they are chained up all summer, when finally the snow comes sport hunters are in right away and [the dogs] are so unhealthy, they are so slow and they are not used to pulling and they sort of forget what to do when its time for a major haul out and its tough.

This dog-team owner points to the problems in the practicality of the Northwest Territories law. Furthermore, he recognizes problems for both the people guiding and for the dogs. Another dog-team owner and guide stated: "I don't think so- no, its not a good law- but it keeps the dogs alive eh? - so it is only good up to this one reason- I think." Another respondent stated that it is not good to keep a dog team tied up without using them all the time; this respondent's concern was for the dog team.

Other respondents gave conditional answers. An elder mentioned that dog teams were often kept in order to travel trap lines and when the prices of the furs went down so did the number of dogs. He drew a parallel to the current situation that dogs in town are primarily kept by people who guide for sport hunters, saying:

> The reason why they are trying to have dog teams nowadays is because the sport hunters have big money and that is the only reason why people keep dogs nowadays- it seems like.

Furthermore, when asked if it was a good law, if the sport hunters were required to go out by dog team, he stated:

> Yeah, for example if a hunter had a dog team for sports hunts - he would never use his dogs to get a polar bear- but he would use a skidoo instead- he would not use a dog team. Some of them used the dogs but others don't and those sport hunters some of them really rush.

When asked again whether or not he thought it was good law, he answered yes, if they had good dogs and lots of snow. During the interview I asked twice if it was a good law, because at that time of the interview I did not understand his example to be his answer.

This elder's responses illustrates that the use of dog teams has for a long time fluctuated in numbers with resources and the economic incentives. His pointing to the use of dog teams for trapping provides an important historical perspective. Many of the people interviewed talked about trapping. Previous to skidoos, people used their dog teams for a variety of functions and trapping was one function that also provided economic incentive in keeping dogs. Although not completely the same, parallels can be drawn between trapping and sport hunting as both are connected to a larger economy and the goods are sent out of the community. Furthermore, the economic incentive whether it is trapping or guiding does not diminish or negate the other functions of dog teams nor their traditional importance.

This elder also made another interesting comment about the use of dogs for sport hunting. His answer to the question whether the law is a good one was conditional, namely: it depends upon how the law is carried out. He pointed out how local people do not use the dogs themselves to hunt for bear. This may be due to the quota on bears and the

limited time people have to catch the bear, for if a person's name is drawn than he/she only has three days to catch a bear and if he/she does not get a bear in those three days, the tag will be returned and another person's name will be drawn. Because of the short time allowed to catch a bear, most people do not travel by dog team.

c. Some Considerations of Guiding:

Local Concerns:

The law requires that local people be the guides, yet there are local politics involved in deciding who becomes a guide and, therefore, who benefits within the local economy. A respondent commented:

> Maybe if they paid attention to people who get to take the sport hunters out- it is like only the well-to-do, or people with jobs that seem to get to be the guides- people who are unemployed are left out- so it is the aggressive ones that get to guide the sport hunters-so it is like not [evenly] shared.

Guiding can create an economic imbalance in the community. The sport hunters bring a lot of money into the community and not everyone benefits equally. In 1995 there were only seven bears allotted to sport hunters. The people guiding were then at an advantage to obtain more dogs or have more investment to put back into the dogs. Guides must have a guiding license and equipment. However, I am unsure how it is decided who among the licensed and equipped people become guides. The choice of who has the opportunity to guide may be a very political decision at the local level.

15. Discussion

In many important respects, dogs are different from hunted animals or the animals referred to in the literature on the relationship between human and non-human persons. The multitude and variety of functions indicate that dogs are separated from hunted animals. On a visit to Northern Canada and Alaska, Jenness wrote about the close connection between animals and dogs:

> The link which binds man and dog is naturally closer than that which binds him to seal or caribou, and so he uses the word *kia* (who) for dogs as well as persons, but *kuna* for all animals which have no individual names. (Jenness 1991: 443)

This comment by Jenness indicates that dogs are different from other animals and indicates the importance of names in Inuit cosmology. Jenness mentions a distinction between wild animals and dogs in that other animals have no individual names. I will specifically deal with the importance of names in the chapter on classification. Jenness' comment about dogs illustrates the bond between humans and dogs. The many functions that dogs can fulfill and the communication between humans and dogs facilitates a close connection. Yet, how does the relationship between humans and dogs compare to the relationship between human and other non-human persons?

Humans treat hunted animals as non-human persons in their relationship of reciprocity with the hunted animal. The animal is treated with respect or as a "person," albeit a non-human one, because the animal made the choice to give itself up to the hunter. A hunter can enter into a relationship of reciprocity with animals that are hunted because the animals are perceived as non-human persons, which have will and voli-

tion and are not dominated nor owned by any human. Moreover, this relationship of reciprocity is carried over to human social relations through the ideology and process of sharing the animal.

The relationship between dog and human has characteristics that do not occur in the relationship existing between humans and other animals. Domestication and ownership, and control of dogs, set canines apart from other animals. Not only are dogs a domestic animal, but their various uses and functions set them apart from other animals.

The hunter and dogs enter into a relationship but not an equal power relationship. The human must control and dominate the dog's actions. Force is sometimes used in training and a whip is often said to be the most useful tool to instruct dogs. Dogs must learn to obey commands from humans. Humans definitely control the relationship that exists between themselves and dogs. People enter into a relationship with the dogs where the dogs fulfill certain functions such as pulling a sled, and in return humans feed and care for the dog. A condition of the relationship between humans and dogs is that the dog must obey the human. People can also control whether or not the relationship with the sled dog continues. Unlike the game animal that is free and empowered to give itself up to the hunter, a dog does not have this power. The relationship between humans and dogs is not reciprocal, however, there is a notion of return; the dogs perform certain functions, as previously outlined, and in return the owner feeds and cares for the dogs.

In addition, some functions indicate that dogs have also been incorporated into the social realm of humans. The connection between dogs and human health as well as the function of socialization and learning to control anger are indications that dogs are indeed incorporated into

the human social realm. More than simply utilitarian purposes, dogs also have social functions which are part of Inuit culture. These functions distinguish canines from other animals.

Despite the unequal power and non-reciprocal relationship with humans, could dogs be considered as having the properties of personhood, like other non-human persons? The next chapter on classification will specifically focus on assessing the position that dogs occupy within Inuit cultural understanding.

V. CLASSIFICATION

This chapter will explore the conceptualization or classification and perception of sled dogs within Inuit culture. The concept of classification is commonly used in anthropology as a way to understand culture. Amoss used the term classification in her study of the ambiguous Northwest Coast dog, she stated:

> a classification is more than a device to organize experience; it is in some ways a replication or representation of the significant social units of the human group that created it. (Amoss 1984: 293)

In order to understand the relationship existing between hunters and dogs, it is important to understand the placement of dogs within Inuit taxonomic and moral order.[3] Classification of dogs is related to the varied functions of canines in Inuit society.

The utilization of dogs for a variety of purposes has influenced how they are perceived. Through an examination of the naming of dogs,

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[3] As mentioned at the outset this study focuses on sled dogs or work dogs but not pet dogs.

physical distance, ownership, prestige, the classification of dogs, and hence, a better understanding of the relationship between humans and dogs as well as the value of dogs can be better understood.

In exploring kinship relations, Guemple describes the special category of dogs: "Dogs, *qimmit*, occupy a conceptual space intermediate between hunted animals and man and constitute a category unto themselves" (Guemple 1988: 132). Dogs are often viewed separate from other animals because of their individual names and their domestic nature, which incorporates ideas of ownership, property, and control. Classification of dogs, will aid in understanding how dogs should be included into the human and non-human person discussion. If dogs are their own category, as Guemple suggests, then can dogs also be considered a non-human person?

Nakashima, in his inquiry into traditional knowledge and taxonomy among the Belcher Island Inuit, mentions the special case of dogs:

> Classification of the dog is of particular interest and will be discussed here even though Qikirtamiut consider dogs neither pisutiit [land walkers], nor even for that matter, uumajuit [of the animal kingdom]. The resemblance of dogs to other members of the group pisutiit is fully recognized, but this is not salient criterion for their classification. (Nakashima 1991: 29-30)

The dogs are known to be animals, but this does not mean they are grouped with other animals. According to Nakashima: "dogs occupy a separate sphere, outside uumajuit [the animal kingdom] and shared only with humans and body lice" (Nakashima 1991: 30). These three are grouped together, with humans considered the central figure. Nakashima refers to these three as an *intimate* class, emphasizing the

closeness of humans and dogs (ibid.). Furthermore, Nakashima quotes an elder's explanation of the relationship between humans and dogs:

> Dogs and humans are classified together because they have been together ever since they came into the world. Dogs are equal to man because they came first with men. (Nakashima 1991: 30)

The explanation is in accordance with the myths that involve both dogs and humans. Lice, unlike dogs, are not considered equals with humans but are considered to be grouped with humans because of the belief that lice come from the human body (Nakashima 1991: 31).

These conceptual categories may be more complex in areas where wolves have a greater presence. Both the Belcher Islands, the focus of Nakashima's work, and Southampton Island, my own field work location, have few if any wolves.

Amoss examines the ambiguous classification of dogs in Northwest Coast society. The dog of the Northwest Coast, like the Arctic sled dog, is the only domestic animal. Amoss describes this special situation:

> They did not designate a special class comparable to the 'domestic animal' for it, but let it remain as a most aberrant member of the animal category -- morphologically a beast, functionally a member of the human world. (Amoss 1984: 293)

This special position of the Northwest Coast dog is similar to that of Inuit sled dogs; not only is the sled dog the only domestic animal, but it is also a special type of domestic animal, classified between the human and animal realms. The perception of work dogs, both in the Northwest Coast and in the Arctic, is different from other kinds of domestic animals, such

as cattle, which are primarily a food source. Commenting on domestic animals, Taylor states:

> The most widespread domesticated animal is the dog. Dogs are eaten in some places and are sometimes raised for food, but no group, apparently, raises dogs as a basic food source (Taylor 1976: 117).

In some definitions of domestication, dogs can be considered a special type of domestic animal. [4]

Another way that dogs could be perceived as being different from other animals is in how they are killed. Jensen reports two methods used in Greenland for killing dogs; first was hanging of dogs, and second was to place a small piece of sharpened whalebone inside a piece of blubber (Jensen 1961). Jensen comments that dogs are not commonly killed by shooting. Although these methods are used in Greenland, when dogs are killed in the Canadian Arctic it is usually with a rifle. Killing of puppies may differ from the killing of adult dogs; Briggs describes how unwanted puppies are killed: "killing puppies was a child's job; adults said that they found it too revolting to do it themselves" (Briggs 1970: 174). The Greenlandic Inuit practice of ending a dog's life with a method other than shooting can signify a conceptual difference between dogs and other animals.

1. Names:

One aspect that sets dogs apart from other animals is that canines usually have individual names. In Inuit culture names have special significance and are linked to spirit and soul (Balikci 1970; Briggs 1970;

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[4] For example, horses and dogs are domestic animals not usually raised for a primary food source

Guemple 1965, 1971; Nuttall 1992; Jensen 1961; Rasmussen 1908; Williamson 1988). Rasmussen states that: "...the Eskimos regarded the name as a kind of soul..." (Rasmussen 1908: 116). Williamson explains that the individual name-soul is "...the point of association of the individual with everything else named in his environment" (Williamson 1988: 246). The significance of the naming system is connected to spiritual and cosmological beliefs as well as social practices (Williamson 1988). Williamson expands on the significance of names in Inuit culture:

> Therefore, in Eskimo belief, the individual name, though contemporarily significant in its society, is more than the means whereby a person's separate social existence is evoked. It is more indeed than the symbolization of his personality; it is his very essence and the spiritual and functional mode of identification and relationship with the rest of his social, physical and spiritual matrix. (Williamson 1988: 246-7)

The naming of dogs is very significant given the importance of names in Inuit culture. Humans are closely connected with canines and one way the bond can be strengthened between owner and dog is through the naming of the dog. Nakashima also refers to names of dogs. He mentions Rasmussen's account of name-souls of dogs. Nakashima acknowledges the significance of dog names and concludes: "The extension of the name-soul to dogs provides another indication of the special bonds linking humans to dogs and the equality of their status" (Nakashima 1991: 31). Jensen reports on naming practices of the Inuit in relation to dogs, noting that puppies are given names very early. He also mentions the connection between the name and soul:

> It is also of interest to note Spencer's most recent study from the North Alaskan Eskimo: While dogs, have 'no souls', their names could be important and there is suggestion that

> by naming a dog one could allow a soul to enter it. (Jensen 1961: 51)

The name is an important indicator of the significance of dogs in Inuit culture. The name suggests that dogs have a soul or spirit. Savishinsky, in his work on the Hare Indian and the dog, states:

> There are, in addition, some other facets of people's relationship with their animals which further reinforce the image of dogs as members and extensions of the social system. As they do with humans, people recognize distinctive identities and personalities among their dogs. This individuality is acknowledged and symbolized by extending to canines the human process of names and naming... (Savishinsky 1974: 176).

Although, Savishinsky's research is with Hare Indians, this practice of dog naming is very similar to Inuit practices concerning naming.

Responses to Inquiry of Dog Names:

I was not very successful in my inquiry of dog names. I asked respondents what *kind* of names were given to dogs; I hoped that even if respondents would not provide me with dogs' actual names, they would mention what categories names fall into; for example, whether names were descriptive in nature. Respondents usually replied that they gave their dogs all kinds of names. When I asked for some examples of names, people would sometimes say that they could not remember *any* of the names or after sharing one or two names they would say they had forgotten the others. If they used English names for their dogs, they would usually share those. The English names ranged from Spiderman, to Brownie, and Ketchup. During one interview when I asked the names of the dogs, the interpreter first stated, "I cannot say," and then said that the interviewee did not remember. On average I received fewer than two

names per interview (38 names from 29 interviews). Very few respondents named all the dogs in a team.

There was a general reluctance by people to share the names of their dogs. I speculate that when the respondent told me they could not remember the names of the dogs, this was a polite way of not making me feel embarrassed for asking an inappropriate question. I had developed a trust with interpreters and they often translated aspects of the culture that I did not understand or was ignorant about. I asked an interpreter if questioning people about dogs' names was inappropriate. The interpreter replied that it was an acceptable question to ask, but also stated that some people would not answer it. I inquired why people would not answer this question and the interpreter suggested that the person may want to use those names again for a dog team. I still had difficulties in understanding that explanation because some of the respondents were past the age of maintaining a dog team or were very ill. In further explanation, the interpreter then stated that they may save the names for their children's dog team, and mentioned that names are important to Inuit. Previously, I was aware that names of *people* were very important, but I was uncertain if this was also true for dog names. This treatment of dog names indicates the significance of dogs and the inclusion of dogs into social practices and spiritual beliefs. After a couple of interviews, I understood the sensitivity involved in asking dog names. However, since some respondents did share the names of dogs they had in the past, I continued to ask the names of dogs during interviews. If someone stated that they could not remember or only mentioned one name, I redirected the interview to another topic.

Names are often descriptive either in relation to appearance or behavior and personality characteristics of the dogs. Names were very important to dog-team owners and each owner had special names for their dogs. One elder commented on how different the dog names used to be, and she stated: "each dog owner had different names; no dogs ever had the same name, even in different camps." Additionally, dogs were not usually given the names of people. One respondent explained to me that a person would become offended if a dog was named after him or her. Similarly, Gubser, in his work with the Nunamiut, states that in general, dogs are given names specifically used as dog names and they are passed down bilaterally (Gubser 1965: 291). However, Gubser also mentions a case where dogs were given special names. A couple without children raised dogs in a house and gave the dogs human names (Gubser 1965: 119). This is not an isolated incident of a dog being given a human name. There is variety in the naming practices of dogs among Inuit and Jensen cites Rasmussen's work with the Netsilik Eskimo, Birket-Smith with the Caribou Eskimo and Whittaker with the Copper Eskimo; all of these accounts mention the occurrence of dogs sometimes having human names (Jensen 1961: 51). In the Fifth Thule Expedition report on the Eskimo Dog, there is an incident reported where a person refused to sell a dog because it had been named after the grandfather:

> Here the explanation was that no one had been named after his grandfather, and his name had been given to the dog, which was then assumed to be the dwelling place of the old man's spirit so it was taboo [to sell the dog]. (Degerbøl and Freuchen 1937: 179)

There were incidents where dogs were given human names, especially when there were no children to take the human names. Name sharing

(*saunik*) is a common practice among Inuit and there is a special bond that forms between name sharers (Guemple 1965). The kin-term of the pre-existing name bearer also applies to the one who shares the name (ibid.). Jenness describes an occasion where a man told a woman to tie his grandfather up: a dog that had the same name as the grandfather was causing problems, and because of the similar name, it was appropriate to refer to the dog as grandfather (Jenness 1991). However, giving human names to dogs was probably not common practice. These incidents demonstrate how dogs can be incorporated into the human world on special occasions. Dogs, when given human names, substitute for humans; Jensen uses Spencer's information on the North Alaskan Eskimos and states:

> Thus, if a family had no children, the dog might be given the name of one of the deceased relatives. This was not done too frequently but was well known. When a dog received the name of a human, it was taken into the house and better fed than the other dogs. (Jensen 1961: 51)

The human names given to dogs on special occasions illustrate the closeness of dogs to the human realm.

Although dogs are not generally given Inuit people's names, some dogs were named after famous people, such as members of pro-hockey teams. Although these dogs were named after hockey players, there may be special circumstances that allow this kind of naming; for example, the people whose names are used are not part of the Inuit community. The use of names from folklore and stories was reported in the Stefansson-Anderson Arctic Expedition, indicating that dogs could be named after a legend (Stefansson 1919). Naming dogs after pro-hockey players, or other outside celebrities, may reflect on-going cultural change.

A respondent mentioned that she named her favorite dog one of her Inuktitut names spelled backwards. The interpreter for that interview explained that when people really liked a dog, sometimes they gave it a name similar to their own. This incident also illustrates the importance of names and may reflect a strong affective connection between humans and canines.

Some respondents stated that they had been told by others to name their team all under one name. Although a few respondents mentioned that this advice had been given to them, no one personally followed it. All respondents preferred to give their dogs individual names. This inconsistency between advice and practice suggests the importance people place on naming dogs. Through an individual name, the owner recognizes each dog as an individual and as having a distinct identity. Since names are so significant in Inuit culture and such special importance is placed on them, the fact that dogs receive names suggests their closeness in classificatory and cosmological terms to the human world. Moreover, the dogs' names are often re-used and reserved for future use, which further suggests both significance of the dogs' names as well as the dogs themselves. This attention given to naming dogs is further evidence of the separation of dogs from other non-human animals, and obviously, a closeness to humans.

2. Dogs as Subjects:

Oral history accounts often include stories about dogs or dog teams (Blackman 1989; Bodfish 1991; Recollections of Inuit Elders 1986; Mendenhall et al. 1989/1990; Puiguitkaak 1978; Qiniqtuagaksrat Utuqqanaat Inuuniagninisiqun 1980). It is not surprising to have dogs

incorporated into Inuit stories or even for them to be the subjects of such stories. Furthermore, dogs are also part of myths and origin stories. Sutton retells a story told to him while he was on Southampton Island:

> ...the Aivilik Eskimos tell the story of a man who hunted *Nanook* [polar bear] on Shugliak a long time ago. Being poor this man had but one dog. He was very fond of his *Kingmik* [dog]. In battle with a huge bear, *Kingmik* [dog] was killed. The man crouched on the ice and mourned. *Nanook*, beholding from afar the grief of the stricken hunter, walked over to the dog's carcass and lay down beside it. The bear's spirit entered the dog's body. *Kingmik* rose with a joyful whine and returned to nuzzle his master's hand. Together they went back to the bear and skinned it. (Sutton 1934: 104-105)

This story appropriately explains the different relationship humans have with hunted animals and dogs. There are many stories where a woman and dog are married (Bloomfield and Nichols 1991; Boas 1888/1901; Brody 1987; Gubser 1965; Hall 1975; Rasmussen 1908, 1929; and others). The woman that marries the dog turns into the powerful sea spirit, Sedna, and is the creative force that controls sea mammals. In some unions between a woman and dog, the woman gives birth to pups or humans or to human-dog hybrids; these myths usually talk of the shame and humiliation surrounding the birth of a part human-part dog. Often the couple (woman with dog husband) is banished to an island and the offspring is often killed. These myths seem to suggest that dogs should be kept separate from the human world, or they may reflect the anomalous position occupied by dogs between human and non-human persons. The inclusion of dogs in stories and myths may be reflective of their placement in relation to the human world.

After a radio call-in show focusing on stories about dogs and dog teams, some people commented that a few of the stories were familiar,

indicating that they had been told before. Not only during the radio call-in show, but also in visiting people, I would hear stories about dogs. Because these stories are well known within families, I would hear the same story told by different family members. My interest in dogs and stories about dogs definitely had an influence on the telling of these stories; however, familiarity with the stories among different family members suggests that stories about dogs are fairly common.

Savishinsky also mentions how dogs are often the central figure in stories among the Hare. The stories he relates are similar to the stories that were shared during the radio call-in show. The dogs usually perform some heroic feat such as returning home during a blizzard or white out. Savishinsky views these stories as highlighting the special sensory abilities of the canines. In my view, the stories point out the special abilities of the dogs, but also operate as a mechanism to incorporate dogs into the social interactions of humans. People are proud of their dogs' abilities and place prominence on dogs by telling stories about them.

When dogs are included in the human social realm as subjects of stories, the dogs may be considered to be an actor or perhaps even a non-human person. The stories about dogs often tell of the dog helping the human in some way, and in this sense the dog is an actor in a relationship with the human. The dog is able to find the way home in a blizzard, when the human can no longer provide direction or control. More than one elder even told stories of a lead dog disobeying a command and thereby saving his life. People recognize and praise these special attributes of dogs.

3. Kinship of Dogs

Another way that the perception of dogs may be revealed is in the use of kinship terminology to describe dogs. Savishinsky comments on the Hare Indians and their dogs:

> Some people also stress the significance of what they regard as 'kinship' bonds among the dogs. Several young men, for example, claim that they prefer to keep sets of 'brothers' in their team because 'they get along so well and work good together.' (Savishinsky 1974: 176)

Similarly, Inuit respondents also describe the connection between dogs in kinship terms. Respondents stated that it was best to keep a litter of puppies together in order to have a cooperative team. Furthermore, some respondents stated that it was beneficial to have the mother of a litter as the lead dog because the team would "listen to the mother."

Savishinsky views this information as a demonstration of how the people project their own social relations onto the dogs. He explains:

> People's perceptions and attitudes thus extend human kinship into the canine realm, incorporating the relations between dogs into familial and familiar patterns. Just as pups become the children's children (the child is father to the dog), man's best friend becomes his brother. (Savishinsky 1974: 176)

Savishinsky indicates *kinship* connects dogs to human social relations: "...dogs become members of the family through an extension of the corporate social bonds of the household" (ibid.).

However, not only dogs are described with kinship terminology, but other animals as well. In describing Inuit hunting ideology, Wenzel states:

> Inuit say, for instance, that animals live in families and that these families are ordered like human families with the same social values that guide Inuit. (Wenzel 1991: 63)

Thus using kinship terminology is not unique to dogs but is also applied to other animals. Dogs' social interactions described in kinship terms may be another indication that dogs, like other animals, are considered non-human persons.

Through expressing the relationship between animals in terms of kinship, people are explaining animal behavior in a familiar way. Similar to Savishinsky's report on the Hare's dog, respondents told me when dogs were "brothers," they cooperated better on a team. Keeping a "family" of dogs together is considered a practical component of traditional knowledge; therefore, expressing the kinship relation of dogs may be the most convenient and effective manner to transmit traditional knowledge. The reason respondents express the relationship of dogs in kinship terms could be because it is the best way to transmit knowledge about maintaining dogs, and not because they are projecting their own societal values on dogs. Although I do believe that dogs are incorporated into the human social realm in a cognitive and affective manner, I am uncertain if the use of kinship terms is a way to assert this.

4. Feeding Practices:

In an interview, a respondent stated that it was important for the dogs to have a varied diet. He then continued that it was important to vary the diet because the dogs tire of eating the same things all the time, and that they are not that different from humans in needing a varied diet. In another instance, I was helping a dog-team owner feed his dog team. While we were feeding walrus meat to the dogs, the owner stated that

walrus was very good and we both ate some while feeding it to the dogs. I laughed and commented to him that it was my first time ever eating dog food. In an Alaskan report on feeding dogs subsistence-caught fish, a respondent stated the importance of feeding dogs fish and stated: "Dogs are just like us, they can't eat 'Friskies' all the time, they need to have fish" (Andersen 1992: 86). In some respects dogs are like humans in attention to their dietary requirements. Securing food for the dogs is important to maintain a team and in the past the food for dogs did not differ from human food; both were derived from local resources. Humans and hunted animals are in a reciprocal relationship. When the animal gives itself up to the hunter, the meat is shared. Part of this meat is also given to dogs and the two relationships are interconnected. The hunter must feed the dogs as part of the responsibility of ownership.

5. Dog Teams as Part of a Value System:

In the recent past, dog teams have been tied into societal values and men have gained respect and prestige for operating superior dog teams, (Freeman 1967, Gubser 1965, Hall 1971, Nelson 1969). As Gubser points out, "a man is often judged by the power, endurance, and size of his dogs" (Gubser 1965: 290). A dog team 's condition and behavior can often reflect the qualities of the owner. Prior to the mid-1960s, a man's worth depended upon his ability to maintain and utilize a dog team (Hall 1971). In the foreword to a life history of Waldo Bodfish, he is described as, "friendly, mild mannered and a man with a very good dog team" (Bodfish 1991: vii).

In Freeman's research in the Hudson Bay, he investigated the relationship between hunting and social activities. In 1960, dog team perfor-

mance was importantly connected with trapping and hunting performance and a number of other societal activities. [see figure 4]. However, in 1970, snowmobile use and wage employment had both increased and dog teams were no longer as important in the overall equation. [see figure 5]. Currently, (1996), dogs are placed into the connections of social activities in a much more marginal capacity than in 1960. [see figure 6] Hunting performance was centrally important in both the 1960 and 1970 situation; and at the present time hunting performance still plays a central role in community activities. The connections between hunting and other societal activities have become increasingly complex with the many lifestyle changes that have occurred since the 1960s and 1970s. Dogs now enter into the equation of social activities primarily as part of a new activity, namely guiding for sport hunters. Guiding is an activity which can generate income for a hunter. Apart from guiding, there was a renewed interest in dog teams for various non-economic reasons.

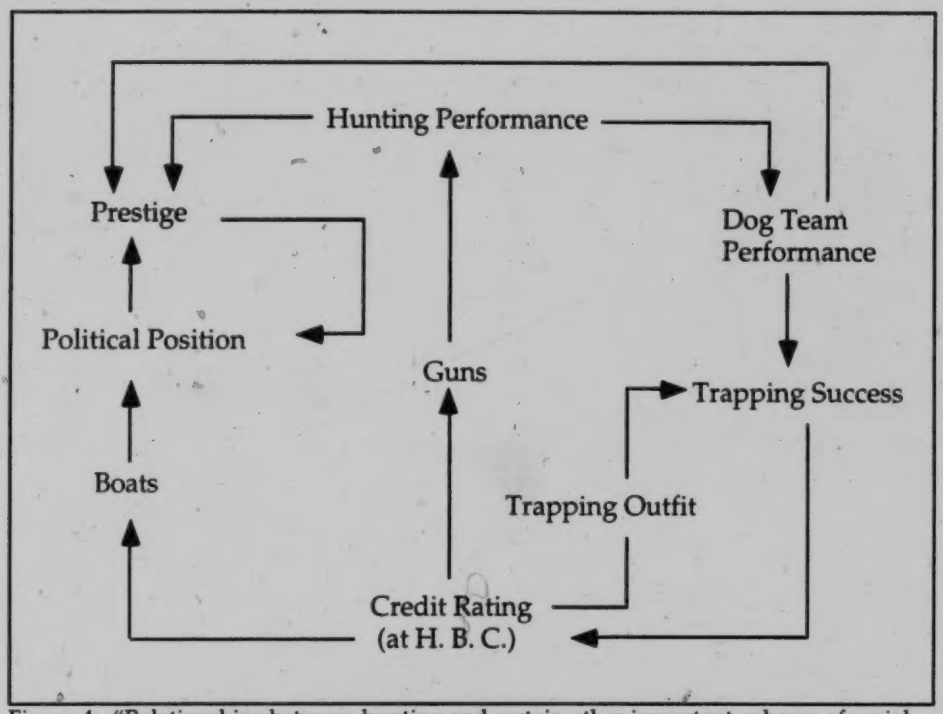

Figure 4: "Relationships between hunting and certain other important spheres of social activity at Southampton Island in 1960" (Freeman 1982: 958).

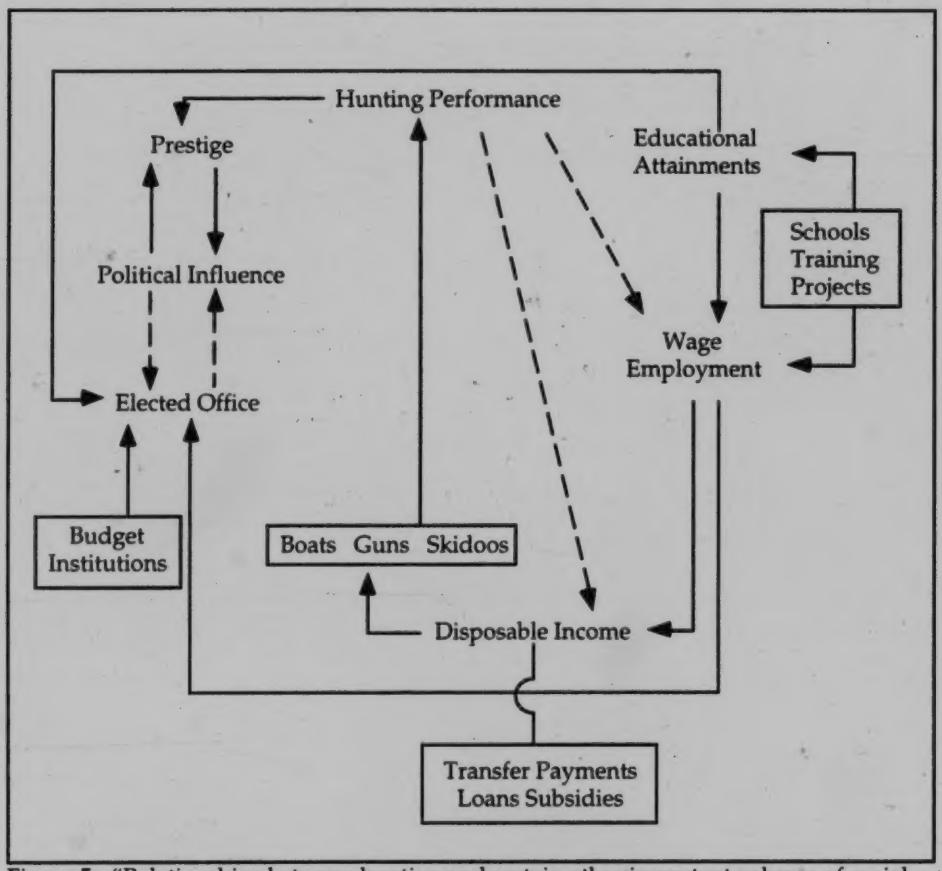

Figure 5: "Relationships between hunting and certain other important spheres of social activity at Southampton Island in 1970" (Freeman 1982: 959).

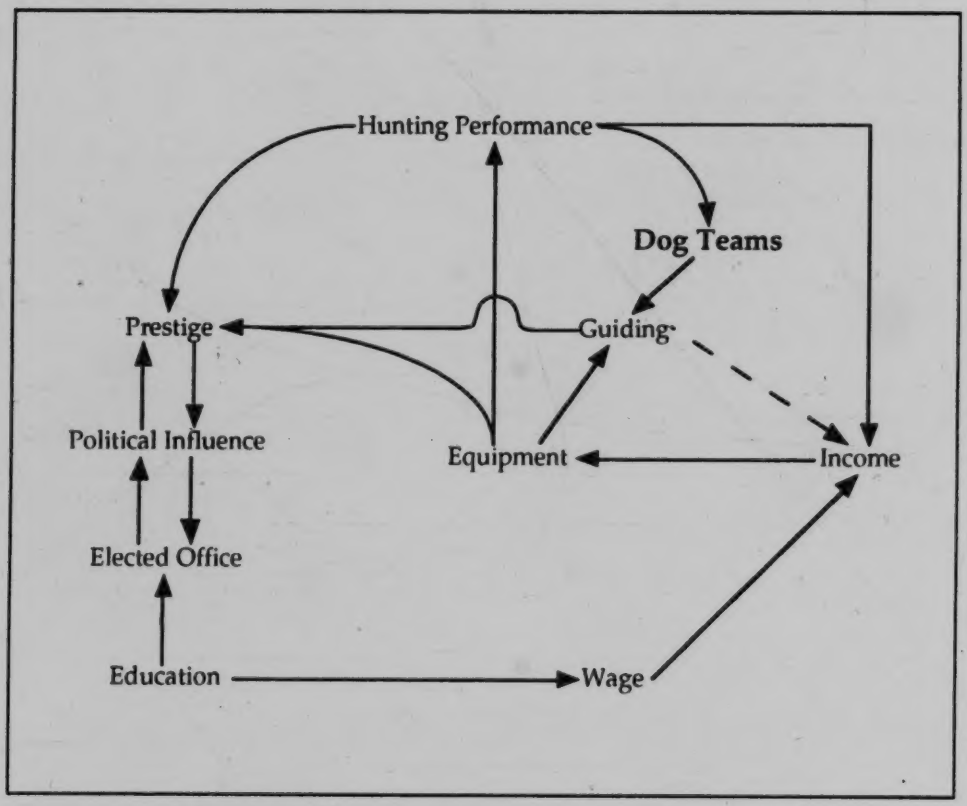

Figure 6: Relationships between hunting and certain other important spheres of social activity at Southampton Island 1995/1996. (modeled after Freeman 1982)

6. Distance Between Humans and Dogs

The physical spacing between people and dogs can also provide insights into classification of dogs. Dog teams are currently kept on the outside of town, tied away from houses and people, whereas the few pet dogs are tied closer to houses. This placement of the dog team away from houses is relatively recent. Living in permanent and concentrated communities has greatly affected the physical distance between people and

dog teams. In the past, dogs were often left loose and, if tethered, they were kept near the snow house or tent, although not usually allowed inside dwellings. People utilized their dogs often and because of the close proximity, they saw them every day.

Today, some dogs are kept just outside of town, while others are as far as five miles away. In order to accommodate people and dogs in a permanent settlement there has been an area allocated for dog teams. The Hamlet planning map shows an area reserved for dogs (on the outer edges of town). [Ch. 3, figure 3]. Although increasing the physical separation between people and dogs, there is still space allotted to dogs. The fact that the area is included on the map indicates that dogs are considered in community development and planning, and therefore are still part of Inuit life.

The physical space between people and dogs is important in establishing and strengthening people's relationship with their dogs. Thus, some dog-team owners, taking advantage of the changing environmental conditions, moved their dogs closer to town once the harbor froze. This provided dog-team owners with an opportunity to see their dogs frequently and conveniently. Some dog-team owners emphasized the importance of seeing the dogs every day in order to build a relationship with the dogs and to train a good team. One dog-team owner whose puppies were about 100 yards away from his house stressed the importance of seeing his dogs every day. He stated:

> I see them every day and get them to know me- like if I miss one day they are not too happy about it and they don't listen as much to your commands.

It is noteworthy that the dog-team owner uses the expression that the dogs would not be too *happy* about his absence. This may indicate that the owner and the dogs enter into a relationship and it is the responsibility of the human person to care for the dogs. Another dog-team owner stated that he used to keep their first team very close to the house:

> There was a time that I had my dogs about ten feet away from the house because I was so protective and I loved that team- I used to use them and maybe it was because I was too young and I just felt like not having them so far away from the house- but now I prefer to keep them quite far out.

In fact, most dog-team owners try to see their dogs frequently, even if the dogs are kept on the outside of town .

Most dog-team owners encourage contact between their children and the young puppies. This contact made the dogs more familiar with people and therefore easier to train. I was present when one dog-team owner moved his team. A young dog ran off and the owner's son explained to me that the dog was a problem because it had not been around people enough. Moving dogs closer was part of the socialization of dogs and building the relationship between owner and dog team.

The possible theft of a dog team is not a motivation for moving a team closer to the owner. There is also a general notion that dogs can be aggressive towards people they do not know, consequently people do not usually approach an unfamiliar dog team. Although occasionally I heard that someone had taken a puppy from someone else, the owners of adult dogs were well known and ownership was well defined despite the physical distance between a dog team and its owner.

As mentioned in the introduction, one of the reasons that dogs were perceived as being different from other animals was the concept of

ownership. Dogs are owned by a hunter or a family, and consequently are unlike other animals.

7. Ownership and Control

Ownership, property and control, along with individual names are part of what set dogs apart from other animals and humans. Certainly, owning a dog team is different from possessing a snowmobile; perhaps the concept of ownership regarding dogs could be viewed more as one of responsibility. Part of the reciprocity in the relationship between humans and hunted animals is the notion of respect and sharing. Similarly, ownership, property, and control could be considered as conditions in the relationship between dogs and humans.

As described in the previous chapter, the functions that dogs serve, outline what dogs provide and in return, humans care and feed dogs. Dogs can be considered a non-human person, yet the concept of ownership is be part of this relationship. Dogs are the property of a hunter, thereby necessitating responsibility from the hunter. Many elders talked about how the dogs should be looked after. I asked one elder if maintaining a dog team was like a full time job:

> It is sort of a full time job- you have to maintain the dogs and make sure they are well in every aspect and that way your dogs will know that they are being looked after and they will be happy. If you are doing other things and not looking after them all that well, then they tend not to be very happy anymore and you should be willing to look after them all the time.

The elder expressed the view that the dog would *know* when it is looked after and that the dog would be *happy*, indicating that the dog has thoughts and feelings and could be considered a non-human person.

Furthermore, this statement addresses the responsibility the hunter has towards his dogs. In comparing dogs of the past and current dogs, another elder also commented on the relationship between humans and dogs:

> The dogs then, they were companions to the people to the owners so they had respect for them but now it seems like the dogs today are everybody's dog and they don't seem to have a loyalty to a specific person- whereas in the older days they did...maybe now-a-days the people are not using the dogs as dog team like traveling by dog teams so maybe they don't respect them or love them as much as they used to or take care of them as property.

Dogs are often spoken of as being happy, angry, or loyal, perhaps illustrating how dogs could be perceived as a non-human person. Hallowell mentions the capacity of other animals to have comprehension:

> ...the interaction of the Ojibwa with certain kinds of plants and animals in everyday life is so structured culturally that individuals act as if they were dealing with 'persons' who both understand what is being said to them and have volitional capacities as well. (Hallowell 1960: 36)

Even in the context of ownership and control, a dog can be perceived as *knowing* if the owner is taking care of it. Maintaining the relationship between dogs and people is dependent upon both parties upholding their part of the relationship: the dog depends upon humans for care and food and in turn the dog acts in a certain manner towards humans.

The classification of dogs and relationship to dogs is perplexing not only because of ownership, but also because of the control and domination that a hunter exerts over dogs. A dog's behavior depends on how humans initiate and maintain the relationship. Dogs learn to understand the master's commands as part of their training and conditioning. In return the owner is obligated to feed and care for the dogs.

The owner controlling the dog team is part of the relationship, but the master has limitations on how much control and force is acceptable.[5] One elder stated how a dog-team owner had to know how much control to use on a dog team:

> ...and if the owner was abusive to his team or too pushy or something then the team would not respect him anymore- so they had to be very careful how much control you used on your dog team.

Control and dominance over dogs regulates dogs' placement in the human world. Dogs are a dominated animal and therefore conceptualized different from hunted animals. Despite what measures may be used to control a dog, whether it is a whip, or tethering of a dog, canines are a dominated animal. In conjunction with the comment on the amount of control over a dog team, the elder continued:

> They-the dogs always knew the consequences if they disobeyed - they would get whipped, so they always knew where to draw the line or how far to go to test their master. The dogs were able to understand where they stand and where the owner stands- they are like people they can understand where they stand.

This comment emphasizes the closeness and distance of dogs to the human world. The dogs are perceived to be non-human persons in that they can understand their placement in relation to humans and their place in the social realm.

Dogs have been neglected in the discussion of human and non-human persons because of preconceived notions of property, ownership and control. Dogs could be viewed as a non-human person, similar to other animals that have qualities of personhood. Although a distinctive

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[5] Both acceptable in the relationship with dogs, and socially acceptable (how other people view the owner's treatment of his/her dogs).

difference is that hunted animals are in a relationship of reciprocity with humans. The nature of the relationship between dogs and humans is that dogs are subordinate to humans, therefore characterizing the distance and the differential between humans and dogs. Dogs are allowed to enter closer to the human social realm than other animals, but their subordinate position allows humans to control how close dogs will be allowed to enter this realm. Despite the status imbalance, dogs can nevertheless be perceived as non-human persons in a relationship, although not a reciprocal relationship, with humans.

8. Person to Person Interaction

Not all classifications involve clear and distinct categories. There is much variety in the relationship between humans and dogs. The relationship depends very much upon the individual people and the individual dogs. A lead dog may be treated differently from other dogs in a team. In fact, the lead dog is often the mediator between the owner and the other dogs. The lead dog is expected to follow the master's commands and thereby signal the other dogs to follow. One elder explained that his lead dog was the master of the pack and the other dogs used to listen to it. The lead dog can even control and stop fighting among other dogs, the elder explained:

> When the packs are fighting - that lead dog could just hit his nose to the other dog and those two dogs would stop [fighting].

A dog team is very much dependent upon having a good lead dog to take commands from the owner and to also command the other dogs.

In running a dog team there is a special relationship between the owner and the team. I asked one dog-team owner if people would have ever borrowed his dogs. In response, he stated:

> I don't think anybody would have borrowed because they did not get enough experience to do the job without thinking too much, without struggling, but even though before people can hop on a dog team and he would know what to do as a team- they still did not like to lend their dogs because when a dog has more than one master it- becomes more disobedient, it starts having problems and maybe one master treats it differently than the other and then the dogs tend to challenge the masters and disobey and be bad - So they did not like to lend their dogs out.

Personal interactions are very significant in the relationship between dogs and humans. Dogs are said to be conditioned to take commands from their owner. Freuchen describes an incident where a dog team was turned over to him: "a man's dogs know only his command" (Freuchen 1961: 109). The relationship between humans and other animals, such as seals, is one of reciprocity, which includes a notion of continuity. Although the relationship between hunter and dog also has a notion of continuity, as evident in the naming of dogs, the relationship is greatly dependent upon particular persons. The interaction between humans and dogs can be complex and re-configured depending on the circumstance. Sled dogs are dominated and controlled by humans, however, not all dogs are treated in the same manner, and some dogs, such as a lead dog, are treated differently from the rest of the team. Humans can form different relationships with their dogs. Perhaps this flexibility allows dogs to be both incorporated into the social relations and distanced from the human world.

VI. CULTURAL IMPORTANCE OF DOGS TO INDIVIDUALS

As part of understanding the relationship between humans and dogs, it is meaningful to examine the importance of dogs to humans in relation to cultural norms. Respondents were asked if dog teams were an important part of Inuit culture or of being Inuit. In the 29 formal interviews, all but one respondent answered yes to this question.

Some respondents simply answered yes, dog teams are important to Inuit. When the respondent answered in this manner, I did not ask him or her to explain further. I did not want to force the respondent to answer more than he or she felt comfortable with. When I asked a young hunter if dogs were an important part of Inuit culture, he stated:

> I think they are important, I think so. They are just good to have around and they have been around for the longest time, and its just natural to have a dog team- in this culture anyway.

Another hunter also responded that dogs were an important part of Inuit culture. He stated:

> It is something that I have learned and I respect having dogs as an Inuit and that is how I grew up with my dad having a dog team and something to pass onto the kids and I use them myself going out camping with a heavy load.

There is the general notion that it is natural for an Inuk to have a dog team. At one time, dogs were essential, and hence an integral part of Inuit life.

Because of the dependence on dogs, other respondents mentioned that dogs are important because of a long-standing relationship people have had with dogs. Some respondents emphasized how much dog

teams "supported" people. One elder mentioned how important dogs were because they supported people from danger and protected people. He continued and explained further that:

> They [dog team] are a very good friend [when] being alone in the land- (the interpreter explains -he never really used to go out with anybody else but himself and the dog team)- so the dog teams are a good friend.

The interaction between humans and dogs is a complex one, and dogs can be considered as friends that help and protect humans. When Tanner describes the Cree and their relationship with hunted animals, he states that sometimes the relationship could be categorized as "friendship" (Tanner 1979). In a similar way, both dogs and hunted animals could be viewed as actor or non-human person and enter into a relationship of friendship with humans.

Other respondents also commented on this long-standing relationship between humans and dogs. One elder stressed the importance of dogs to Inuit:

> [dog teams] are a very important part of our life because they [dogs] have helped us before and they are very important to us- if we did not have the dogs -we would be nothing- we would be bait for bear or anything-

This statement implies that a current reason for the importance of dogs is their historical significance. Another elder commented:

> The most important part of the dog is that way back from the beginning of the world the Inuit have been having dog teams and they have saved lives from starvation and the dog team helped a lot to the Inuit, and that's the most important part of dog team.

Humans depended on dog teams and recognized dogs for their contribution. In a report on North Greenland, good dogs are equated with the very survival of people:

> The availability of a robust dog may, without exaggeration, be said to be a pre-condition for the survival of human beings in North Greenland. Without the right dogs, no communications, no hunting, no chance to survive. (Larsen 1960: 49)

The long-standing relationship humans have had with dogs affects peoples' evaluation of their current importance, despite the fact that snowmobiles fulfill some of their earlier functions. Currently, people rely on snowmobiles to hunt, but they do not enter into a relationship with a machine like they do a dog team. Dog teams are recognized and respected for their contribution to humans. Part of the importance of dog teams is the relationship people developed with dogs throughout history.

Information about the importance of dog teams is conveyed in evaluating the tradition of dog team use. How the future is perceived can indicate the value of that tradition. If someone believes dog teams are an important cultural tradition, than she/he will probably desire that the activity continues. I asked respondents if they hoped future generations would continue using dog teams. The most common response was that parents or elders wanted to see the use of dog teams continue, but the choice would be up to their children. I believe that this response concerning the child's choice for a dog team, is consistent with Inuit child-rearing philosophy (Briggs 1970; Guemple 1988). Children are encouraged to develop their interest but they are not forced.

Some respondents hoped that future generations would continue to use dog teams and expressed concerns for the future. A few respon-

dents felt that it was important to pass along traditional knowledge concerning dogs and dog team use because it was never known when the information would be needed. One respondent commented on the importance of dogs in the future due to economic uncertainty:

> I would want to pass those dogs around for future generations because maybe then, the people will not be able to afford to buy snowmobiles, with the new territory coming, its pretty scary. [the new territory refers to Nunavut]

Another respondent expressed the view that it was very important for others to learn about dog teams, for he believed that dog teams were an important part of the Inuit way of life. He stated it was important for survival to maintain dog teams. Although respondents knew that skidoos were a valid option for travel, the high price of skidoos and the uncertain economy in the North made people uncertain about the future. In such a harsh environment where expensive and non-local technologies such as snowmobiles make people dependent on an outside market, it is important to have alternatives. Similar reasoning to keep dogs occurs in a report on the Chukchi Sea area in Alaska: "However, some families are keeping dogs 'in case something happens.' as one man explained" (Cultural Dynamics Limited 1983: 179). Dog teams are a part of Inuit culture and are a method of transportation that is supported by local resources. Continuing to use dogs and passing along traditional knowledge produces a sense of security and independence.

Another respondent (an elder) stated that he would like to see dog teams used again, like when they were used all the time. He also expressed concern over the fact that the people who really know about dog teams are becoming fewer and fewer, indicating that certain knowledge is

required to maintain a dog team. Furthermore, the rationale he gave for wanting people to continue with dog-team use was because he believed that a dog team was always better than a skidoo.

VII. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Much of the Arctic and Subarctic literature that discusses the relationship between hunters and animals focuses on hunted animals, or non-human persons. Rather than simply saying that sled dogs are ambiguous and different from other animals, I have explored the role of sled dogs in an Inuit cultural context. Focus has been on the functions and the classification of sled dogs in order to understand the relationship between people and dogs, as well as the value of dogs.

1. Functions

The various functions that dogs fulfill demonstrate their importance and value. Despite the fact that snowmobiles are predominately used to fulfill the function of transportation, dogs are still used and they also fulfill many other functions. Not all the functions of dogs are as observable as transportation. The connection between dogs and human health is linked to cultural constructs, demonstrating the inclusion of dogs into cultural beliefs and practices. Functions of canines are tied into greater social constructs and values, for instance the function of emotional release involves ideas of how people should relate to one another. Responsibility learned from maintaining a dog team is another function that is largely tied into the social values and appropriate behavior for humans.

Currently, one of the main economic functions of dogs is the opportunity for the owner to guide for sport hunters. Although guiding does provide an economic benefit, it does not diminish other reasons for valuing dogs, such as their traditional importance. The number of dogs has often fluctuated with availability and access to resources, as well as economic considerations. Peterhead boats made it easier to catch walrus for dog food and therefore increase the number of dogs. In addition, trapping also was an incentive for having more dogs. An economic presence does not necessarily diminish personal intentions and motivations for keeping dogs.

The variety of different functions that dogs fulfill suggests their importance in Inuit society. Moreover, dogs are often incorporated into social practices which illustrate how closely dogs can be incorporated into the human realm. The functions that dogs serve set them apart from other animals and also affect the relationship between humans and dogs.

2. Classification

Along with the functions it is important to examine the classification of dogs. Functions and classification are interrelated; functions have a large impact on how dogs are perceived, and in turn, classification also influences functions. Dogs are the only domestic animal in the Canadian Arctic, yet sled dogs are neither a pet nor a domestic animal like cattle. The classification of dogs is rather ambiguous, for dogs seem to vacillate between the human realm and the animal realm. Dogs differ from other animals in that they are *named, owned* and *dominated*.

In order to explore the classification of dogs, the issue of names was addressed. Dogs on a team are usually given individual names. Names

are significant to spiritual and cosmological beliefs as well as social practices of the Inuit. Names are an important connection between spirit and the manifestation of spirit in Inuit culture. The names of dogs can be reused, which suggests a continuity of dogs in much the same way that there is a continuity of a human's spirit. Dogs are given individual names and these names, like human names, are viewed as having special significance. Dogs are not usually given human names, therefore separating and distancing dogs from humans. However, dogs are the only animal given individual names, therefore making them closer to humans than are other animals. During interviews, names were sometimes not revealed, being preserved for future use, thereby alluding to the significance of names for canines. Moreover, the individual names for dogs suggests that dogs may be considered as non-human persons.

Dogs are often the subject of stories and people often had pride in a dog for performing some heroic feat that was recounted in a story. Dogs as subjects of stories indicate that they are individually remembered. People's familiarity with some of the stories and the numerous stories told during informal interviews and the radio call-in show suggests that stories about dogs are fairly common.

I am uncertain if the connection between humans and animals is reaffirmed by the use of kinship terms when speaking of animals. Savishinsky and Wenzel mention the significance of kinship terms with hunted animals as well as dogs (Savishinsky 1974 and Wenzel 1991). Kinship terms may be used in order to effectively transmit traditional knowledge. The kinship terms used for animals can indicate the belief that beings other than humans can live in their own social world. Dogs and other animals can be considered non-human persons without using

kinship terminology to assert that humans are projecting social relations onto animals, thereby recognizing them as non-human persons.

Previous to the widespread use of snowmobiles, the condition, size, strength and behavior of dogs reflected positively on the capability of the owner. Dogs were a large part of the prestige of an owner and a good dog team contributed to the prestige of an owner. Although in a more limited fashion, dogs still figure in the social assessment of an individual: there is a certain amount of prestige in having a good dog team, and people often comment on the strength or weakness of someone's dogs.

Furthermore, physical spacing can indicate the closeness in the relationship between people and dogs. Dogs are kept close to the home, which separates them from other animals. In defining domestication, Savishinsky comments on the proximity between animals and owners:

> The concept of domestication has literally a homely origin. To domesticate means not only to tame or bring under human control but to attach to the home, and it is traceable to *domus* and *domesticus*, the Latin words for home or house. (Savishinsky 1983: 112-131)

Before living in permanent towns, dogs were always kept very close to the home, although usually not allowed inside dwellings. Not only did closeness provide warning of bears, but it also reaffirmed the relationship between people and dogs. At the present time some dog-team owners took advantage of changing environmental conditions and moved their dogs closer to their homes, once the harbor froze. Other owners did not live in areas where they could move the dogs closer, so they stressed the importance of seeing their dogs frequently. Some elders emphasized the importance of seeing dogs every day so that the dogs would *know* they are

being looked after and hence would be happy. The closeness between people and dogs in physical distance suggests the importance of dogs to people. Furthermore, the idea of the dogs *knowing* that they are being looked after suggests that humans may be considered to enter into a relationship with dogs as non-human persons.

Property ownership and control are properties peculiar to dogs and not shared with other animals. These notions are important aspects of the relationship between humans and dogs. The notion of ownership could be considered part of the responsibility that people have towards their dogs; by owning dogs, a person (human) is obligated to feed and care for the dogs. Control or domination is exerted over the dogs and the dogs must learn to obey. The dog obeys because it must as a consequence of its training and because obedience is part of the expected relationship with humans.

The relationship between human and dogs can be very specific to a particular owner and his/her dogs; the dogs are seldom borrowed and often only obey their masters. The behavior of dogs often reflects back to the personal characteristics and qualities of the owner and each owner can have a slightly different relationship with his/her dogs. Furthermore, the relationship is also dependent upon the dogs; some owners stated how much they loved one team while another team made them angry. The relationship between dogs and humans is often dependent on the "persons" involved.

The relationship existing between humans and dogs is an unequal one, yet dogs can still be perceived as a non-human person in a relationship with humans. The notion of ownership and control segregates dogs from other animals, but it also makes dogs closer to humans. Dogs can be

considered non-human persons that enter into a relationship with humans that is different from the relationship humans have with other animals.

Reciprocity:

Hunters and hunted animals are thought to be in a relationship of reciprocity (Tanner 1979; Fienup-Riordan 1983, 1990; Nuttall 1992; Wenzel 1991, among many others). The concept of non-human person allows for a hunter to enter into a relationship of reciprocity with a hunted animal. Respect and sharing are the conditions of the reciprocal relationship. Reciprocity with the hunted animal also is contingent upon the notion of continuity of persons (both human and non-human). The hunter acts respectfully so that the animal can return; the relationship between hunters and hunted is one of equality and reciprocity, and Fienup-Riordan states:

> ...the Yup'ik Eskimos viewed the relationship between humans and animals as collaborative reciprocity; the animals gave themselves to the hunter in response to his respectful treatment of them as persons (albeit non-human) in their own right. (Fienup-Riordan 1990: 72)

Wenzel comments that reciprocity is central to the connection between humans and animals:

> For Inuit, hunting constantly reiterates the moral balance that constitutes the basic relationship between humans and animals. The fundamental trait that underpins these relations is the belief of Inuit that reciprocity exists between hunter and animal, between one person and another and between the human community and the natural environment. (Wenzel 1991: 141)

Reciprocity is sometimes used in order to validate the view of animals as non-human persons and in this way the argument is circular. Animals

must be viewed as "persons" in order to enter a relationship of reciprocity, and can be viewed as persons as a result of the relationship of reciprocity. In one way personhood is a criterion and in the other it is a result. Regardless, the hunted animal can be perceived as a non-human person that enters into a relationship of reciprocity.

The relationship with dogs is not one of equality but of domination. Commenting on the relationship between seals and humans, Fienup-Riordan notes: "Power does not reside in the hunter himself. It resides in the context of his relationship with the seals" (Fienup-Riordan 1983: 175). Brody explains that "the hunt is thus a form of contract between the partners..." (Brody 1987: 73). Unlike the relationship humans have with hunted animals, the relationship with dogs is of unequal power. The power does not reside in the relationship with dogs, but rather with people. However, dogs can still be considered non-human persons with sentience, intelligence, and will. Many of the elders' stories mentioned how a dog saved a person's life. Dogs can be perceived as non-human persons not because of their reciprocal relationship with humans, but due to their individual names and affective relationship with humans.

Ingold discusses a concept of non-human person that is not contingent upon a notion of reciprocity. Ingold incorporates non-human animals in a discussion of personhood: "If we accept that animals other than human beings may be conscious, intentional agents, then we have also to ascribe to them personal as well as natural powers" (Ingold 1988a: 9). Furthermore, Clark uses a discussion of taxonomy to allow for more than humans to be considered persons. Clark allows for different societies to have different views of persons:

> ...we can afford to allow that other linguistic communities have other views on who are 'people' (i.e. respected members of their community), just as they have other views about edible vegetables or trees. (Clark 1988: 31)

Clark states that personhood does not necessarily have to be associated with human beings:

> Either there is a natural kind of persons which is not to be identified with the biological taxon *'Homo sapiens,'* or there is only a normal, evaluative grouping. Either way we cannot merely dismiss other communities' taxonomies as 'biologically ignorant,' as if they had just never noticed that deer were not human beings. (Clark 1988: 31)

Both Clark and Ingold include more than humans in the concept of persons. Inuit view hunted animals as non-human persons and enter into a relationship of reciprocity. However, reciprocity is not necessarily a condition to perceive an animal as a non-human person. Ingold and Clark do not make reciprocity a condition for personhood. Dogs, like other animals, could be perceived as non-human persons within an Inuit cultural context.

3. The Cultural Importance of Dogs to Humans

Respondents were directly asked if dog teams were an important part of Inuit culture. Of the 29 respondents, all but one answered yes. Some respondents commented on the long history of the relationship between Inuit and dogs. In general dog teams were considered important for their functions and for their reliability. Furthermore, most respondents hoped that dog team use would continue in the future, therefore also indicating the importance of dog team use.

4. Hunter-Gatherers, Pastoralists and Dog-Team Owners

The relationship between hunters and dogs also challenges the distinction made between hunter-gatherer peoples and pastoralists. Ingold distinguishes the two groups by their relations to animals in his article, "From Trust to Domination: An Alternative History of Human-Animal Relations" (Ingold 1994). In his view, hunters enter into a relationship of trust with animals and pastoralists enter into a relation of domination with animals. What Ingold omits from the discussion is that the hunters also have a domestic/dominated animal: the sled dog. The case of the sled dog challenges this distinction between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists. The boundary line separating hunter-gatherers and pastoralists by relationships to animals may not be so clearly defined as Ingold suggests. The relationship between humans and sled dogs will be explored using Ingold's concepts of both *trust* and *domination*.

a. Domination:

Sled dogs are kept by a group of people that are hunters. Dogs are owned and controlled; tethered when not in use, and when in use they are harnessed and must work to pull the sled. Unlike the concept of domestication, where dogs are sometimes considered a special case, there is no ambiguity in the concept of domination when applied to dogs.[6] Dogs learn to obey the commands that are reinforced with a whip. When asked if he used a whip, one dog-team owner replied:

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[6] There are different definitions of "domestic" and Ingold states "...the precise meaning of domestication has remained a topic of scholarly debate for well over a century..." (Ingold 1994: 3). Dogs are not raised as a primary food source and therefore differ from some domestic animals.

> Yeah, I use it quite often - when they [the dogs] are not listening to my command. I don't use it as much when they are fully trained but when they don't listen to me I use it - just to remind them that I am the commander.

The dogs are dominated and owned, which makes them different from the wild animals. According to Ingold, the hunter has a relationship of trust with animals and it is only the pastoralist that has a relationship of domination to animals (the ones the pastoralist owns). Yet, the hunter has a relationship of domination with the dog, thereby being an exception in Ingold's division of hunter-gatherers and pastoralists. In fact, dogs are even incorporated into the relationship with the hunted animal; sled dogs can aid in hunting and food is given to canines. Ingold chooses to use the terms trust and domination to focus on the *relationship* between humans and animals so animals and humans can be inhabitants of the same world (Ingold 1994). Although Ingold redefines the distinction between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists according to their relationship with animals, he does not reconfigure the line that separates the two groups. In defining the differences between domestic and wild animals, Aschmann states:

> there is a sharp dichotomy among the societies here discussed between those which control their animals as full domesticates and those that hunt them. (Aschmann 1965: 262)

The distinction between hunter-gatherer and pastoralist is the same, regardless of the terms wild and domestic, or trust and domination. The Inuit, however, hunt animals and keep a domestic animal, the dog. They therefore challenge the boundary between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists regardless of the terms employed by Ingold (*trust* and *domination*). The division between hunter-gatherer and pastoralist when defined in

terms of the relationship each has with animals is not as clear and distinct as Ingold suggests. Ingold maintains that hunters have a relationship of trust with animals, however, this thesis demonstrates that the relationship between hunter and sled dog is one of domination. This next section will explore the relationship between people and dogs in terms of trust.

b. Trust:

Ingold categorizes the relationship between hunter-gatherers and animals as a relationship of *trust*. It is therefore important to examine the relationship between humans and dogs in terms of trust. In a clarification of the term trust, Ingold states: "The essence of trust is a peculiar combination of *autonomy* and *dependency*" (Ingold 1994: 13). Ingold distinguishes *trust* from reciprocity. Ingold uses the work of Tom Gibson in order to draw out the features in the relationship between hunter-gatherer and animals. Gibson states that the relationship is one of 'friendship' without obligation, and a relationship that preserves autonomy for both parties involved (Ingold 1994). The concept of 'friendship' to categorize the relationship with animals is also used by Tanner in his work with the Cree (Tanner 1979). Ingold also cites Bird-David to extrapolate on the concept of trust:

> Bird-David (1990) draws essentially the same contrast under the terms 'giving' and 'reciprocating,' referring respectively to the relationships that hunter-gatherers and cultivators see themselves as having with the environment of the tropical forest. (Ingold 1994: 13)

In this context, cultivators are viewed as being in a relationship of 'reciprocal obligation' (ibid.). This use of the term 'reciprocal' is very different from the way that scholars writing about northern hunter-gatherers explain the concept of reciprocity. Tanner, as mentioned above, speaks of the relationship between humans and animals as being one of "friendship" but Tanner also describes the relationship between humans and animals as one of reciprocity. Tanner mentions the transformation in the relationship between human and animals and states: "The act of killing, on the other hand, becomes an exchange between 'persons' at a reciprocal or equivalent level" (Tanner 1979: 153). Ingold chooses to use the term trust rather than reciprocity, but it may be caused by unclear definitions of reciprocity. Furthermore, when Ingold supports his notion of trust, he specifically refers readers to Fienup-Riordan (1990: Ch. 8). Although there is an implicit notion of trust implied in Fienup-Riordan's explanation of the relationship between hunter and animal, at the outset of the chapter it is explicitly stated that the relationship is *reciprocity*: "Yup'ik Eskimos traditionally viewed the relationship between humans and animals as collaborative reciprocity..." (Fienup-Riordan 1990: 167). Although Ingold uses the term trust it does not seem drastically different from the notion of reciprocity between hunters and animals.

Trust and reciprocity are fairly similar notions and both involve autonomy from both human and non-human persons in the relationship. Since dogs are not in a relationship of reciprocity with humans it is also understandable that they are not in a relationship of trust with the hunter/owner. The dogs are owned and controlled and therefore do not have autonomous action. The dogs depend on their owner and in a cer-

tain sense they *know* or expect that they will be fed and cared for, but if the owner does not fulfill those duties, then the dog does not have the freedom to find a new owner. The hunted animal must *give* itself up to the hunter and in this action the hunted animal exercises its autonomy; a dog does not have freedom to act like a hunted animal, and is bound to the relationship with humans.

However, the relationship with dogs is not simply domination. I will not use the term trust because, according to Ingold, it incorporates notions of autonomy, but I will use the notions of reliability or dependability between people and dogs. Previous to widespread snowmobile use, people greatly depended on dogs, and although currently not to the same extent, people still depend upon them. Today, dog-team owners are usually confident in their dogs' ability while traveling. Numerous respondents commented that dog teams were superior to snowmobiles because of the reliability and dependability of dogs. During interviews, respondents were explicitly asked the importance of dog teams, and some respondents referred to the historical importance of dogs and how people were in a sense indebted to canines for their aid to humans. To illustrate this idea of reliability with which people viewed their dogs, here is a story from an elder:

> There was a time when it is very white-out and snowy and no wind at all. I never said [anything] to my dogs and I just let them go by themselves, without saying anything to those dogs. I just let them go freely and they got me home to my igloo. It was very white-out and snowy and dark, and I could not see anything. My dogs stopped without me knowing that the igloo was there- so when I tried to get up from my sled- I just bumped into my igloo.

There were many stories of this nature told primarily by elders.

Elders also shared tips on raising good dog teams which incorporated ideas of building rapport with dogs. For example, many respondents emphasized the importance of frequently seeing the dogs. There was also a general belief that if a man beat his dogs a lot, or worked the dogs too hard, then his dogs would never be a good team.

There is a level of intimacy of the relationship between dogs and humans allowing dogs to be closer to humans than non-dominated animals. Dogs are given individual names and are considered to have individual personalities. The relationship of dogs and owner is very specific to the "persons" involved. Dog teams were seldom borrowed and the dogs' obedience was dependent upon the masters' commands. The relationship with the dog is more than simply domination. Although dogs are dominated and controlled by the dog-team owner the relationship between humans and dogs is complex, and is more than simply domination.

By separating hunter-gatherers and pastoralists by their relationships to animals, Ingold has ignored the complexities within the society as well as the complexities in the relationship between humans and non-human persons. Sled dogs challenge the division between hunter-gatherers and pastoralists that Ingold suggests, and sled dogs demonstrate that complexities can exist in the relationship between people and animals. Sled dogs are very different from other animals, and the relationship between dogs and humans is very different from the relationship humans have with other animals. By focusing on the relationship with animals, Ingold ignores the possibilities of different relationships between humans and animals within the same society. Hunters are in a relationship of

domination with sled dogs and pastoralists may enter into a relationship of *trust* with animals they hunt. A group of people can have more than one way of relating to animals. Due to the complexities in the relationship between humans and animals, separating hunter-gatherers and pastoralists on the basis of a perceived contrastive relationship each group has to animals may not be very useful.

Through an examination of the sled dog, principally in one Arctic community, I have tried to broaden an understanding of the relationship between humans and non-human persons or animals. In examining the functions and classification of dogs, the relative importance of dogs has also been revealed. Despite thirty or so years of snowmobile use, sled dogs have remained culturally significant for a variety of reasons. Sled dogs are intimately linked to Inuit culture through naming practices and the human social realm through stories and other beliefs. Sled dogs are not pets, are more than dominated animals and more than ambiguous: they are non-human persons who have entered into and continue a long-standing culturally based relationship with humans.

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